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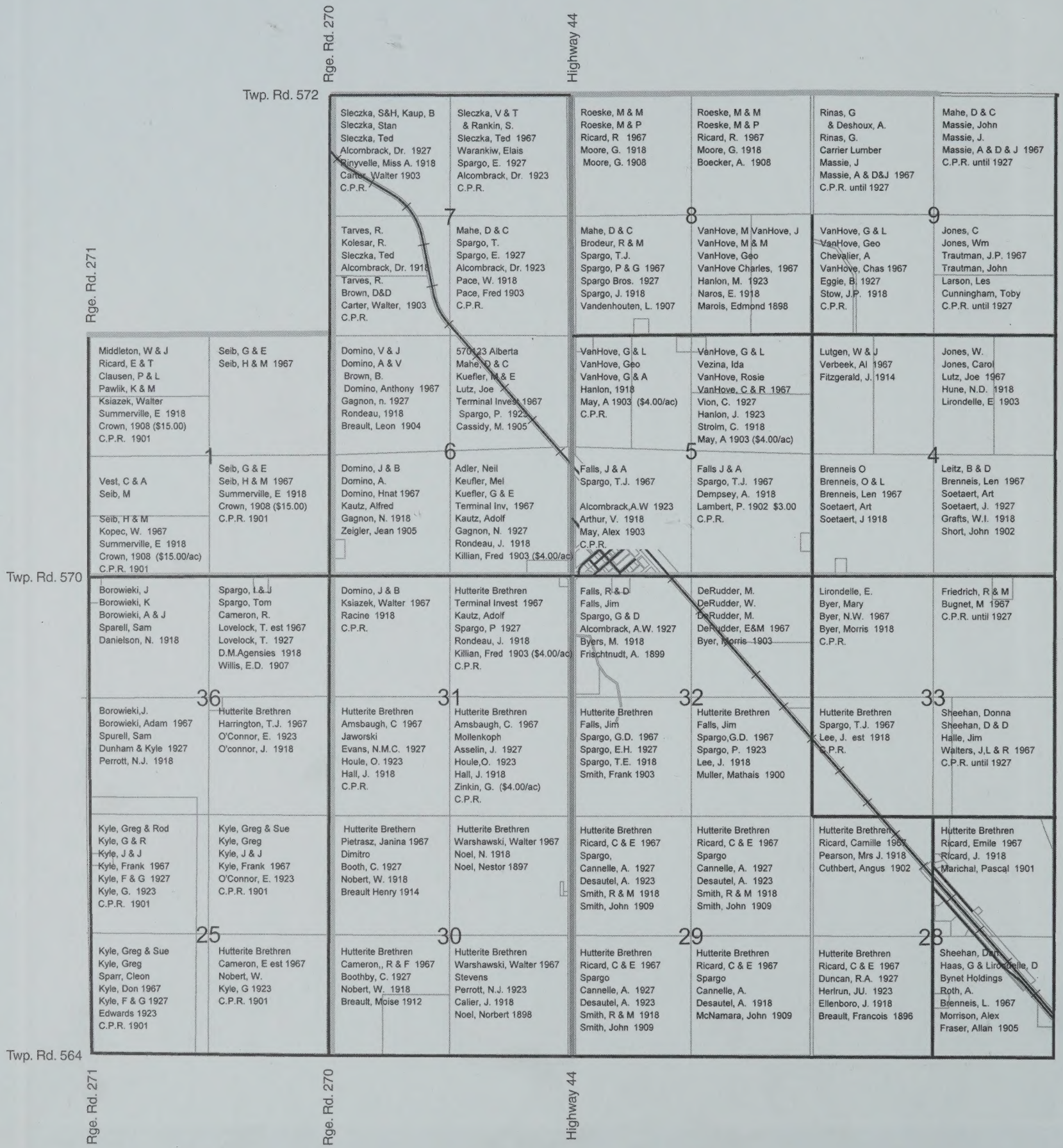
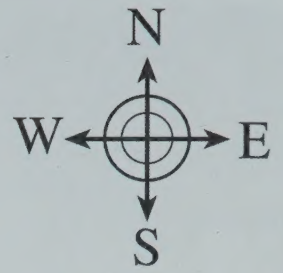
GRASS ROOTS

Mearns, Alcomdale and District



Land Ownership Map

1893 - 2007



Please Note: the years prior to 1918 indicated next to the landowner names were taken from the Provincial Archives. The years 1918, 1923 and 1927 show ownership on those dates according to Cummins Rural Maps. Due to the amount of archival research required, the middle years 1928 to 1967 are not included. The most recent owner names were taken from Sturgeon County maps. All information is subject to error.

Rge. Rd. 260						Twp. Rd. 572	
Lutz, K & M & A & A Hermanutz, J & S Hermanutz, Joe Hermanutz, L.J. 1967 Paul Hermanutz O'Grady 1910	Bayley, G & S & M Hermanutz, Joe Hermanutz, A & J Hermanutz, Paul 1967 Logan, A.J. 1908	Hermanutz, B Joly, G. Hermanutz, A & J Hermanutz, P. 1967 Logan, A.J. 1923 Logan, T. 1918 Smith, R & M 1918 Smith, John 1909	RHV Farms Ltd Clavan Farm Ltd Altmiks, J. Altmiks, Alvin 1967 Tailleur, P. 1927 Royal Trust Co. 1918 Smith, R & M 1918 Smith, John 1909	Vanveenand, R. RHV Farms Clavan Farms Altmiks, John Altmiks, A. 1967 Mahe, J. 1927 Perras, J. 1918 Laronde, J. 1899	RHV Farms Ltd Nobis R&L Mahe, B. 1967 Perras, 1918 Laronde, J. 1899	Crown, L&F Mahe, J.M. est 1967 Logan, N.J. 1918 C.P.R. 1903	
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Trautman, H & K Trautman, H.E. 1967 Larson, Les - Cunningham, G Cunningham, Toby Cooper, C. 1918 Dwyer, Thomas 1906	Trautman, H & K Trautman, J.P. 1967 Bet, S.S. 1927 Cooper, C. 1918 Dwyer, Joseph 1907	Lietz, B & D Gravelle, R & M Girard, P & Y Houle, Mary 1967 Royal Trust Co. 1918 Smith R & M 1918 Smith, John 1909	Golden, L Girard, P & Y Houle, Mary 1967 Royal Trust Co. 1923 Smith, R & M 1918 Smith, John 1909	Vandenhouten, J & J Vandenhouten, J. 1967 Vandenhouten, L. 1918 Savard, Alex 1899	Lutz, A&A & J&K & Bayley, S. Lutz, A. 1967 Boisvert, Mrs E. 1927 Boisvert, N. 1918 Laronde, J. 1899	Crown, L&F Mahe, J.M. est 1967 Logan, N.J. 1918	
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34		35		36		31	
VanBrabant, M & E Van Brabant, M&E '67 Sabourin, Ovilla L'Hirondelle, A. 1918 L'Hirondelle, J. 1907	Kluthe, G & M Kluthe, Geo 1967 Kluthe, Joe Brown, G. 1927 L'hirondelle, A. 1918 Nault, Ed 1899	Kluthe, J Kluthe, W & J K4 Farms Kluthe, John Kluthe, J. 1967 Cloutier, Cyrille L'Hirondelle, A. 1918 C.P.R.	Lirondelle, L & E Kluthe, W & J Kluthe, John Kluthe, A. 1967 Houle, J. 1918 C.P.R.	Kluthe, D. Kluthe, B Kluthe, L. 1967 Cloutier, C. 1927 Cunningham, F. 1918 Deschamps, Nancy 1894	Egg Lake Coal Co. Kluthe, W&J same as above 1967 Houle, A. 1918 C.P.R. 1903	Lutz, A & A & Lutz, K. Lutz, K. Lutz, Andrew 1967 Cunningham, F. 1918 C.P.R. 1903	
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27		26		25		30	
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GRASS ROOTS

Mearns, Alcomdale and District



Cover Design Donated by Spirit Vision Art & Design

Cover design by Shannon Vance of 'Spirit Vision'

"The cover design serves to remind people of fields, grass, open spaces, railroads, grain elevators and country homes. The decorative embellishment symbolizes grass and wheat while the rope emphasizes strong ties and tight knit communities. The watercolor image clearly shows rails, grasses and farmers' fields with buildings and trees in the background. Rails disappear in the distance, symbolizing the journey from past to present times."

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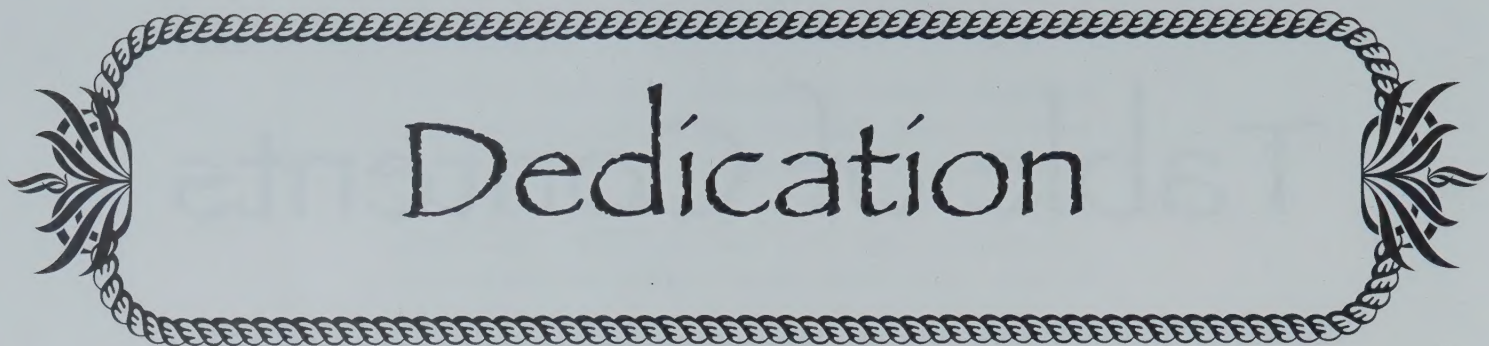
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Dedication

Grass Roots: Mearns, Alcomdale and District is dedicated, with profound gratitude and thanks, to the pioneers of the Mearns and Alcomdale Districts. These pioneer men and women left their families and homes elsewhere and came here in search of a better way of life. Recognizing the rich farmland that existed in this area, they settled here and cleared the land. They endured many hardships, sacrificed and struggled to lay a firm foundation for their families and future generations. We pay tribute to their faith and devotion to the church and community where they gathered to gain strength and courage. These pioneers brought with them the foresight to retain their heritage, culture and family traditions. They developed a lifestyle and love of home and community that still exists today enabling us to stay in touch with our *Grass Roots*.

It is dedicated to the memory of the late Maureen (Sheehan) Slecza, one of the initiators of this project, who passed away October 2006, midway through the writing. She was a teacher and a lover of the written word and spent hours on the phone, encouraging people to share their stories of the area. She visited seniors who had wonderful stories to share but were reluctant to put pen to paper. Some of the interviews she conducted were translated from tape to computer. Maureen was firm in her belief that the pioneers of the area be recognized and thanked for providing us with good roots. We hope this book fulfills her wish, as this was a project close to her heart.

It is dedicated to the people of the past, present and future who make up the communities of Mearns, Alcomdale and surrounding district.

Acknowledgements

The 'Grass Roots – Mearns, Alcomdale & Area' history book committee would like to thank and acknowledge the following organizations, businesses and individuals for their financial support towards the production of this book.

The Alberta Lottery Fund – Community Incentives Program

The Busby Lions Club

Dr. Leonard Nobert

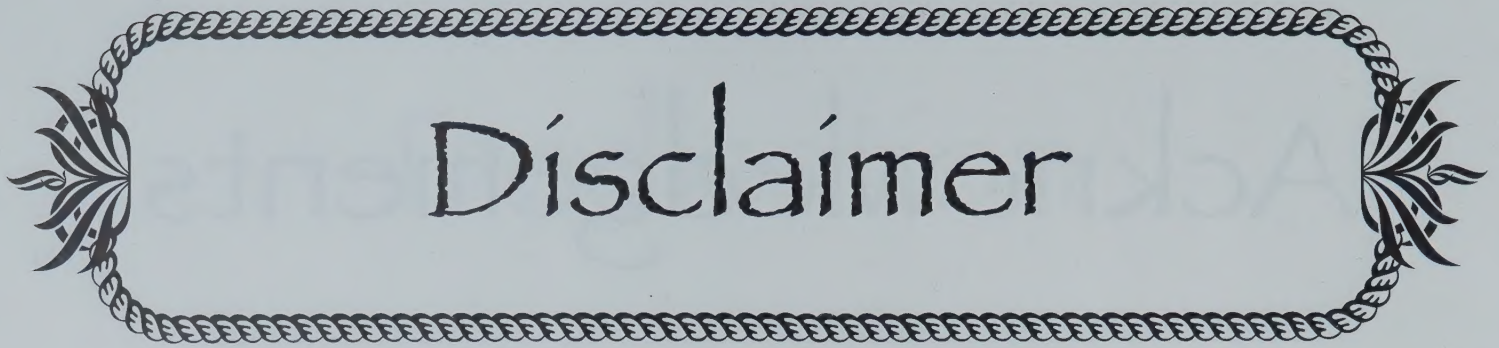
Jerry Kaup, Councillor, Sturgeon County

Lou-Ern Upholstery & Blinds – Ernie & Louise Wulff

Inland Aggregates

Lawrence & Evelyn Lirondelle

B.D. Girard Trucking and Bobcat Ltd.



Disclaimer

Although every effort was made to verify the authenticity and accuracy of submitted materials, the occurrence of some errors or omissions is inevitable. There may be some discrepancies in the spellings of names and places, as well as inaccuracies in some dates. If we were unable to resolve these differences, the Committee chose to print them as provided in the original text.

*No book is entirely perfect,
For error will creep in.
Sometimes wrong information sent,
Is what commits the sin.
And even printers make mistakes,
For which they tear their hair.
Sometimes two people disagree,
On whom, or when, or where.
It might have been the person
Who wrote the history.
It might have been the typist,
For blame can fall so free.
So if you're dead before you're born,
Or married when you're four.
Or we've omitted anyone,
We know you can be sore.
Or your last name is not your own,
Your picture's not too good;
We ask you – please forgive the crime,
We did the best we could.*

Anonymous



Foreword

In 2004 a project was embarked upon that was more involved than folks ever realized. Mearns had just celebrated a successful school reunion and people were wanting to hold on to that wonderful feeling of 'home' and 'roots', so what better way than to gather stories for a history book. Stories that appear in the book came from many sources. Some were submitted by individual families, some verbally, and some from taped interviews or from newspaper articles. Others were updated and printed, with permission, from other history books. You may notice some family stories are not included. This is either because they did not submit a story or they are no longer living in the district and could not be located, despite all our efforts. Although the idea for this history book started in Mearns, it was decided to add neighboring Alcomdale since the two communities overlap.

The idea of a written history caught on quickly and numerous people came forward to offer assistance. Many hands make light work but eventually the work falls on the shoulders of a few. We are grateful to, and would like to acknowledge, those few for their tenacity and determination to see this project to its completion.

...Claire (Kieser) Stitsen for her positive attitude and perseverance over the last four years. Claire spearheaded the committee and did so with enthusiasm and passion.

...Marion Friedrich for her expertise as our secretary treasurer and her much appreciated and invaluable common sense. She was instrumental in applying for and obtaining grants to help fund the project. The maps on the jacket of the book and on the town histories were a daunting task that required much research and time on her part and she persisted until the job was accomplished.

...Lorette (Pelletier) Bruce for her original set up, organizational skills, many hours spent typing over 300 stories to the first and second draft stage, lugging containers of information from meeting to meeting, taking pictures of the committee work as it progressed, and her expertise and knowledge of publications.

...Janet (Nobert) Macdonald for her hours spent at the computer and for amassing the reams of paper that ultimately became this book. She oversaw the project in its last year and was a driving force on the committee. It is due to her relentless perseverance and constant attention to detail that this book came to completion.

...Janet (Sheehan) Boddez for her writing skills, information gathering to help complete stories, proofreading and photographic talent. Janet spent a day with Claire and Marion touring the countryside, taking photos of interesting sights to add to our feature stories. She came into the project with many instructions and information passed on to her by her sister, Maureen. She filled in and helped out wherever needed.

...Lucille (Nobert) Heemeryck for her time and expertise in researching documents, assisting with editing, proofreading and photo selection. These were time-consuming tasks and the load was lightened with her help.

...Other Committee Members: Leonard Nobert for sharing his scads of old photos, newspaper articles and knowledge of the area. While writing this book we found Leonard to be a lover of history, a wealth of information on local lore and a storyteller of history; Dan Brenneis for his dedication and commitment as Director of the Mearns Historical Society. As one of our Mearns pioneers, Dan's knowledge of the past was invaluable in putting fact to story; Oliver Brenneis for his wit, humor and good memory. Many times when we were 'hung up' on names, land description or dates of certain events, Oliver came through for us and set us straight; Phyllis Borle for sharing her mini-archive of historical documents and her knowledge of the Mearns church history; Therese Ricard for her wealth of knowledge on the Mearns community and for always being there to provide coffee and goodies at the meetings (for many of us, these goodies served as our supper); Simone Kluthe, Joan Polakovits, Myra (Brenneis) Dwyer and Lawrence & Evelyn Lirondelle for their participation in the committee work; Kathy Trautman, who did an excellent job as our phoning committee as well as helping wherever needed; and additional typists Diane Falls and Louise Dubois.

Our committee members were there every step of the way, writing individual and feature stories, visiting archives, coming to the meetings, proof reading and editing, selecting photographs and many other duties too numerous to mention. This remarkable group of people has made this project a success. Without them this book would never have been published! We want to thank our spouses who supported us during late nights and long days. Lastly, we want to thank everyone and apologize to anyone we failed to mention here who helped in anyway with their time and whole-hearted co-operation. Every effort was greatly appreciated.

The committee was also gifted with the support and encouragement of Friesen Publishing representative, Rob Rohac, who shared with us his passion for preserving memories in print. Rob passed away February 2008.

We would also like to acknowledge Shannon Vance of 'Spirit Vision' who designed the cover of the book and the chapter pages, as well as transformed our maps into professional looking documents. She is a graphic artist and the daughter of Janet (Nobert) Macdonald.

Special thanks to all who so generously shared their stories and photographs. So much was submitted that to print everything would have made the cost of the book prohibitive so committee decisions had to be made on what would eventually see its' way into the finished book. We hope this history book, despite its' inadvertent errors and omissions, will meet your expectations.

Enjoy



Back Row, Left to Right: Lorette (Pelletier) Bruce, Diane Falls, Simone Kluthe, Claire (Keiser) Stitsen, Joan Polakovits, Kathy Trautman, Phyllis Borle, Lucille (Nobert) Heemeryck. Front Row, Left to Right: Tony Stitsen, Marion Friedrich, Dan Brenneis, Therese Ricard, Janet (Sheehan) Boddez, Janet (Nobert) Macdonald, Oliver Brenneis, Leonard Nobert



And so it began... presentation of money from St. Charles Reunion to start the history book. Joyce Brenneis, Dan Brenneis, Maureen Slecza, Claire Stitsen, Terry Cunningham

Good Roots

*Help us to give our children good roots, God.
As we work with our plants we can see that the sturdiest,
and those which bear most freely, are those whose roots go deep, gripping rich soil;
they have a base from which they can grow tall and beautiful and sound.*

*Let this community furnish that kind of soil for our families, God.
Enriched with good music, good books, good talk, good taste,
but above all, goodness of spirit, goodness of action.*

*May those who come here feel welcome, and those who leave here feel warm.
May those who live here know, in every fiber of their beings,
that they belong to people who, for all our faults, are good people;
people of decency and honor, who would not willingly hurt or cheat any living thing.*

*Let our children grow freely, God, in whatever direction their nature directs,
but give them root strength too,
so that they will never deviate too far from their own beginnings.
Help us to give our children good roots.*

Adapted from "Lord Let Me Love" by Marjorie Holmes

Our History

Klondike Trail

The “Klondike Trail” misnomer

By Desmond Sutton – Taken from “Decades of the Independence District” (1981)

The name “Klondike Trail” is actually a misnomer. This trail was in use by the white man long before the Klondike Gold was even heard of. The first recorded white traveler over that trail was the well known western surveyor and explorer, David Thompson. This man traveled to Lesser Slave Lake in 1799 and returned over the approximate route of that trail. He repeated that same journey in 1802. The purpose of these two trips has been lost in time. He started both trips from Fort Augustus, later Fort Edmonton, on the North Saskatchewan River. The authority for this above fact came from J. B. Tyrell, editor of “The Champlain Society, 1916”. One authority has it that David Thompson was commissioned by the Hudson Bay Company to survey a route suitable for travel with pack horse trains, traveling to the Company’s fort on Lesser Slave Lake. This supposedly took place in 1813. This is disputed by others who claim that Thompson’s western surveys were completed by this time, and that he was back in Eastern Canada working on his great map of the northwest.

Deadman Lake

Another story concerning David Thompson tells of the naming of a lake. This body of water is bisected by the Fifth Meridian. Its legal position is stated as 25-56-1-W5. It is known as Deadman Lake. It is very shallow, about seven feet of water in the deepest part. However, it is large in area, approximately two sections. The story goes that while David Thompson and his survey party were camped on the shore of this unnamed lake, a member shot a goose and when crawling out onto the ice in an attempt to retrieve it, he fell through and drowned. His body was recovered, the story says, and was buried in the dense stand of spruce, on

rising ground, at a considerable distance east of the lake. None of this story can be confirmed but something, which lends credence to it was found by the author. While engaged in clearing and breaking the lake, a heap of stones, forty-five in all, was discovered. These stones were found in the extreme southwest corner of NE 20-56-27-W4. This is a scant mile from the supposed location of David Thompson’s campsite. These stones were only revealed when a heavy breaking plow, pulled by a track type tractor, brought them to the surface. They were in a compact heap about two feet across, and if left undisturbed had been six inches beneath the ground surface. They matched one another very closely in size, shape and color. They were manifestly brought to that spot by man.

There are only two spots where such stones could be found in such numbers. One place is on the south shore of Deadman Lake and the other is the spot where the Klondike Trail crossed the creek draining Deadman Lake, and about three quarters of a mile from this lake. The stones at one time must have been piled in a conical form, but time had flattened the heap and buried it. To state positively that these stones marked the burial site of the drowned member of Thompson’s crew is nothing but conjecture at this point. There has been no investigation except the viewing of the spot by persons from the Department of Archaeology of the Government of Alberta. The writer can pinpoint the site to within a few feet.

Another story regarding the naming of the lake states that a Cree Indian was killed in a drunken fight on the shore of the lake and it was given the Cree name of HAHPEUKAKETACHTCH, meaning “The man who got stabbed”. This story was given by Steele. It was also known in the early days as Berland Lake, named for an early fur trader of that name. It is not known whether he was an employee of the Hudson Bay Company or if he was an independent trader.

Although the foregoing seems to get away from the Klondike Trail, it is a part and parcel of the section of the Klondike Trail known as the Deadman Lake section. This part of the trail had a bad reputation among the travelers using it and more so after the advent of wheeled vehicles.

In the year 1824, Sir George Simpson, Governor of the Hudson Bay Company, authorized the laying out and cutting of a trail suitable for the use of pack horses. The trail started at Fort Edmonton and went northwest to Lesser Slave Lake to the trading posts on its shores. This trail was cut through during the winter of 1824-25. In the spring of 1825, the fur returns were brought from Lesser Slave Lake to Fort Augustus (Edmonton).

Trade goods for Fort Assiniboine and the Lesser Slave Lake trading posts were regularly carried by pack horse over this trail for a considerable period of time. Fort Assiniboine was established on the Athabasca River in 1823. It was an important point on the trail. Two overnight camps or stopping places were established between Fort Augustus and Fort Assiniboine. The first one was on the southwest shore of Deadman Lake. The second was on or near where the original site of the Town of Barrhead was located. This meant three segments of approximately 30 miles per day of travel for pack horses. There were several stopping places between Fort Assiniboine and Lesser Slave Lake.

For the first 50 or so years, the trail was chiefly used by the Hudson Bay Company, Indians and a few parties of white men traveling that way. Then in the year 1896 gold was discovered in the Yukon and Alaska. Many who went to these goldfields left from the west coast and traveled by water. A large number, however, chose to travel overland from Edmonton, which was in the Northwest Territories then. Included in that number was one man whose name has come down in history simply because of his mode of transportation. He took the wheels off his wagon and replaced them with whiskey barrels. He reasoned that barrels would be better than wheels in crossing muskegs and rivers. This idea probably had some merit, but he failed to take into his calculations the fact what whiskey barrels were not built strong enough to be used as wheels over such rough ground. He did get to a point somewhere between Edmonton and St. Albert before his novel transport fell apart. It is unknown whether he made it to the Yukon but he certainly made history as "Barrel Smith".

The writer did know one man personally who completed the trip to the goldfields. He was the late Johnnie Aslin of Riviere Qui Barre, later of Alcomdale. He wore a large gold nugget on his watch chain as proof.

By the year 1900 the gold rush was over and many of those who had gone up the trail had returned, not a few empty handed. Thousands of would-be homesteaders were migrating into the area. During the year of 1903 the areas of Sion, Belvedere, Dunstable, Mosside and various districts northwest of Edmonton were taken by homesteaders. The Klondike Trail was the main avenue of travel to and from Edmonton. This continued until 1913 when the Edmonton, Dunvegan and British Columbia (E.D. & B.C.) Railroad reached as far as Westlock. Roads were then constructed on surveyed road allowances to the nearest railroad point. This development spelled the end of a lot of use of the old trails. Portions of it were still in use until the mid thirties. Today part of the trail is visible from a hill a mile east of the Sion corner, on the Victor Kazowsky property. There are parts of it that can be seen north and northeast of Lac La Nonne and again in the Fort Assiniboine area. The greater part of this trail has fallen prey to the farmer's plow.

This trail had many names. Some of the names were The Simpson Trail, The Hudson Bay Company Trail, The Klondike Trail and last but not least, The Homesteader Trail. By naming it the Klondike Trail, it perpetuated an event, which in the long run was of the least importance to the people in this area.

The old trail had its disappearances, its births and its deaths. There are undoubtedly unmarked graves along its length. In the Fort Assiniboine area there is a grave site of a seven year old girl. When the survey crew went through, this grave was found to be on the road allowance. Rather than disturb the site, the Department of Highways allowed the road to curve around the spot. The name of the little girl is unknown and her grave is maintained by members of the Fort Assiniboine Ladies Club.

The strange disappearance referred to, occurred when a storekeeper of Sion completely disappeared between Sion and Riviere Qui Barre. To the best of my knowledge, no trace of the body or the horse and buggy was found. No person was ever suspected of crime but it was a known fact that he was carrying a considerable amount of money with the intentions of buying a supply of groceries for the store. He was seen to leave Sion but was not seen at the Indian Agency on the Alexander Indian Reserve, nor at the Riviere Qui Barre stopping place on the trail. As this happened 60 or 70 years ago, chances of solving it are very dim.

Another recollection was told by the writer, James Mitchell. In the early 1900's the latter had traveled the trail on horseback looking for land northwest of Edmonton. On his return a fire was

burning spreading from Fort Assiniboine through to St. Albert. This was called the Grand Brule, very dangerous to go through and not get burned. Some spruce stands were missed by this fire, as was proven when the Sutton family moved to the farm in 1928. The spruce left standing was scarred and the deadfall was well decayed which is possibly a 20-year process.

Another note of interest came from Mark Bruno of the Alexander Reserve who is known to have said that his father, Edward Bruno, was an interpreter for the Hudson Bay Company when they had a small trading place on Deadman Lake.

Land Rush in North Enormous!

Edmonton April 18 – When the doors opened at the land office yesterday morning 85 men were in line to make entry on homesteads, some of whom have been there since seven o'clock. All day the office had been so crowded that it was almost impossible to get in or out. Three rows of men stood packed like sardines outside the counter, money in hand, waiting for their turn to file. Some very interesting scenes and character studies are painted every hour.

Homesteaders nowadays are not depending on one choice; most of the land hunters cover two and sometimes three townships and pick out a half a dozen quarters that will suit them. One man at the immigration office said he had picked five quarters, and it was

300,000 ACRES IN NORTHERN ALBERTA

The Western Canada Land Company, Ltd

CABLE ADDRESS:

"NARES, WINNIPEG"

CODES USED:

ANGLO-AMERICAN,

A.B.C. SYSTEM

BEDFORD McNEILL

WESTERN UNION

NARES, ROBINSON & BLACK,
CHIEF AGENTS

OFFICES: 381 MAIN ST. WINNIPEG, MAN.

BRANCH OFFICE, EDMONTON, ALTA.

Winnipeg, Dec. 8, 1909. 190

George Nisbet, Esq.,
24 Kier Street,
Pollokshields,
Glasgow, Scotland.

Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 22nd ult., has come to hand. We enclose you our folder of the Elk Park Valley showing lands marked red for sale in the Edmonton district as advertised in the "Canada" newspaper. Our agent at Edmonton is Mr. George T. Bragg whose name is endorsed on the folder. The few remarks on the folder are absolutely correct. The district is one of the best in Western Canada being specially adapted for the growing of oats and raising of stock. The soil is a black loam on a clay subsoil; there is excellent grass and vegetation, and water can be obtained by digging from 15 to 30 feet. There is plenty of wood and timber for building purposes or affording excellent shelter for cattle. Edmonton is a fine growing city of some 20,000 population, and has three lines of railway, namely the Canadian Pacific, the Grand Trunk Pacific and the Canadian Northern. There is a large packing house being erected there by Messrs. Swift & Co., of Chicago, which shows you that this enterprising firm considers Edmonton district one of the best in the west for that purpose. The price of lands runs from \$8.00 upwards; it all depends how far you wish to go from the line of railway or from Edmonton.

G. M. #2

8/12/09

However, we can do nothing until spring. If you are passing through Winnipeg, you might call on us when we will give you a letter of introduction to Mr. Bragg who will be pleased to show you around and get you what you want,

Yours truly,

ROBINSON & BLACK,

Per

FMR/ACJ

Enc.

lucky for him as although they were all open when he went out, there was only one left when he got back to the land office. Immigration officials say there is every indication that the stampede will keep up unabated for several weeks.

The land office is crowded every hour of the day and night with men looking for information for parties of eight or ten men each.

Winnipeg April 18 – Demands for farm

machinery are so great this spring that Winnipeg agents of eastern factories state they have difficulty in filling orders. This is a record season, the increase over last year being from 50 to 150 percent. Hurry up orders were sent by distributors to the eastern makers, but the supply was way below the demand. Condition goes to show that new settlers lose no time in breaking land and getting in crops

(Calgary Herald, April 18, 1906)

THE WESTERN CANADA LAND COMPANY LTD.



ROBINSON & BLACK, GENERAL AGENTS, WINNIPEG, MAN.

LANDS FOR SALE

IN THE CELEBRATED

ELK PARK VALLEY

AND

WABAMUN LAKE DISTRICT

NORTHERN ALBERTA

EDMONTON

THE "BULL'S EYE" OF THE PROVINCE
OF ALBERTA

FOR PARTICULARS APPLY TO THE OWNERS

THE WESTERN CANADA LAND CO. LTD.

ROBINSON & BLACK

GENERAL AGENTS

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

—
GEO. T. BRAGG, Local Agent
EDMONTON, ALBERTA

Good Markets

Remember that in locating in the **ELK PARK VALLEY** you are within easy distance of Edmonton, where there will always be a growing market for all farm products.

Railroad Facilities

The Canadian Northern Railway is building north and west through the very heart of this great valley, and trains are already running from Edmonton to Morinville and Stony Plain, 25 miles in each direction.

The Grand Trunk Railway is also building its transcontinental line west of Edmonton, besides other branch lines being under contemplation.

THE

ELK PARK VALLEY

Is situated North and West of Edmonton, otherwise known as the Edison and Wabamun Lake Districts, and comprises about one million acres, and as its name implies, is one of the most beautiful Park Regions of Western Canada. Scattered here and there are fine poplar trees reaching a diameter of some twelve or fifteen inches. Years ago this was a stretch of bush and timber, but fires of recent years have destroyed the greater part of the timber, while now open stretches of prairie ready for the plow can be seen on all sides.

The soil is the foundation of all great agricultural districts, and "dame" nature has favored the

ELK PARK VALLEY

with a deep, heavy, rich black loam on clay subsoil, rich in humus, and in its wild state produces a rich and luxuriant growth of grass mixed with peavine and red top.

Northern Alberta can boast of a very superior climate, and so uncommon is it to see a cloudy day that it has been well termed Sunny Alberta.

Abundance of rainfall, few high winds, and a first-class soil, are the essentials that produce luxuriant and profitable crops. The purest of water, too, is reached at a depth of from 18 to 25 feet.

Anyone who has been fortunate enough to
visit

EDMONTON

THE CAPITAL OF THE PROVINCE
OF ALBERTA

must have foreseen the great opportunities and possibilities of that growing city and the country surrounding it; while to-day the population of Edmonton is but 15,000, it is prophesied by the most skeptical that it is bound to become a city of 50,000 inhabitants inside of five years, and just think what this means to the person owning land inside a radius of 75 miles of such a city.

CATTLE INDUSTRY

Besides raising wheat, oats and other cereals, the cattle industry is one of the most productive, owing to the richness of the natural grasses and the mildness of the climate enabling the cattle to feed out-doors the year round.

FUEL PLENTIFUL

The timber is a great advantage to the new settler, furnishing him with building logs, fence, rails and posts, and protecting his cattle from winter storms. although it may be said that few settlers house their stock in the winter, besides supplying him with an abundant supply of fuel at his very door. Coal also is in abundance, underlying more or less the whole of the country.

FACTS:

TORRENS TITLE LOW TAXES

Schools Convenient

Abundant Rainfall Vegetation Unsurpassed

Mild Winters and Long Summers

Soil—the Richest

Healthful Climate The Last WEST

AND

Your Last Opportunity to
Secure Cheap Lands

CLIMATE

The climate is ideal, the district being marked by an equable temperature, free from rapid and extreme fluctuation, especially in the growing season.

The rainfall is ample for all kinds of grain, beginning usually the latter part of May and extending on and off to the end of June, and with frequent showers in July and August, by which time the grain is fully matured.

Local Government

Sturgeon County

Sources: *Story of Rural Municipal Government in Alberta*, 1909 – 1983

Excerpts from article written in 1981 for the 70th anniversary of administration

Sturgeon County, Alberta is located north of Edmonton and covers an area of approximately 2,100 square kilometres (810 square miles). It was incorporated under its current name in 1997. Before then it was known as the Municipal District of Sturgeon No. 90 which was formed by the amalgamation of two former "Labour Districts" which came into existence in the late 1890's. These were Statute Labour District No. 230 and Statute Labour District No. 45 (and Fire District). Historically, the region was a part of a large ethnic block settlement of French-speaking Albertans.

Statute Labour and Fire District No. 45 comprised the area north of the City of Edmonton, such as St. Albert, Namao, Lamoureux, Morinville, Villeneuve, Riviere Qui Barre, Calahoo, Alcomdale, Mearns and part of Legal. The names of Samuel Saucy, Charles Whalen, Walter Pelletier, Georges Gagnon, L. Ricard, E. Harnois, P. Kelly, A. Fortier, J. Tough, J. Latulippe, E. Courchesne, G. Noyes and many more appear on several occasions in the old records of minutes. In a brief passage from such records we note that, for the year 1900, there was one mile of road cleared, 16 culverts built, 9 repaired, 440 yards of corduroy completed, and 28 sloughs and holes filled.

Taxes, which ranged from \$2.50 to \$4.00 per quarter of land prior to the turn of the century, were paid to a Central Office at Regina. The property owners had the choice of paying half of their taxes in cash or do roadwork for the other portion. Council meetings were held in farm homes, which in most cases was the secretary-treasurer's home. His wife would provide meals to Councillors attending.

Alberta's first school was established in what is now Sturgeon County, near the Hamlet of Lamoureux. The first wheat grown for sale purposes was produced in Sturgeon County by Mr. Bill Cust. The county was also home to the first grist or flourmill, which was brought over from France by the Roman Catholic Mission.

Statute Labour District No. 230 was composed of the areas of Gibbons, Amelia, Bon Accord, Coronado, Fedorah and Waugh. The first overseer was Mr. F. H. Bibaud, and the councillors were: Charles Brumfit, Mr. Nielson, P.H. Conway, W.R. Gibbons, Mr. Mason and Norman Bibaud.

From the years 1911 to 1917, this area was known as Local Improvement District 28-5-4 and Local Improvement District No. 548, having Mr. Gabriel Morris serving as secretary-treasurer. The Municipal District of Sturgeon No. 548 was formed January 1, 1918 with the office located on the farm of Gabriel Morris, secretary-treasurer, namely the NW 4-56-24-W4. The members of the Council were: G.A. Wilkinson (Reeve), J. Gowin, H. Bell, Art Lamoureux, A. Gagnon, R.A. Hewitt. Councillors' remunerations were set at \$2.00 per day. Taxation rates were calculated at .07½¢ per acre.

With the development of this country, the former Statute Labour and Fire District No. 45 was then formed into a municipality in 1919 to be known as the M.D. of Ray No. 549, with the following councillors: N. Lavallee, G. Noyes, W.T. Nobert, T. McRae, V. Majeau and J.A. MacDonald. Mr. M. Hogan was appointed as secretary-treasurer at \$100.00 per month. The office was located in St. Albert.

The areas of Pickardville, Vimy, Legal and Busby were incorporated into the Municipal District of Hazelwood No. 549 having as councillors: D. Petrie, J. Glebe, H. Casavant, P.O. Brien (Reeve), W. Shaw, and H.G. Lefebvre, with W.J. Wood as secretary-treasurer. This office was located at Pickardville.

Wages for labor on road construction were in accordance with the time; man and team of horses – .70¢ per hour; man and four horses – \$1.05 per hour; and foreman – .60¢ per hour.

The year 1942 saw another change in the municipal administration of these areas – the Municipal Districts of Opal No. 578 and Sturgeon No. 90. Alfred E. Saunders had been the secretary-treasurer of the M.D. of Opal from 1926 to 1942 but did not remain on staff at the time of the amalgamation of the two districts. At the first meeting of the new council, the name of the Municipality was changed to the M.D. of Sturgeon No. 90, with Gabriel Morris appointed secretary-treasurer. He served this area for 35 years, until his sudden death in 1943. Mr. Albert Walters was then appointed as secretary-treasurer and acted as such until his death in early 1956.

The Municipal District of Ray No. 549, and Hazelwood No. 579 were amalgamated in 1943 and these areas were known as the Municipal District of Morinville No. 91, with the office located in Morinville. The first council consisted of: J. Dusseault (Reeve), J. Schafers, Art Saligo, Alex Morrison, N. Logan and secretary-treasurer, Oscar Patry.

This form of local administration remained as such for both the Municipal Districts of Sturgeon No. 90 and Morinville No. 91 until 1954 when larger municipal units were introduced by the Provincial Government and the two Municipal Districts were united as one, to be known as the Municipal District of Sturgeon River No. 90 with the office located on the Fort Trail, Edmonton. The boundaries of this municipality were set to form co-terminus boundaries with the Sturgeon School Division No. 24. The first council, consisting of Messrs. L. Rye (Reeve), J. Crozier, S. Walker, G. Holmes, and G. Meunier (replaced by A. Nobert one year later), appointed Mr. Art Walters as secretary-treasurer and O. Patry as assistant secretary-treasurer. Mr. Walters died in 1955, and was replaced by Mr. O. Patry.

This local government remained in office for six years, but during this time the Provincial Government had introduced the County system for rural municipalities. In January of 1961 the Municipal District of Sturgeon No. 90 changed status and became the County of Sturgeon No. 15. Messrs. S. Walker, (Chairman), Ed Courchesne, L. Rye, W. Flynn, A. Nobert, W. Van de Walle, D. Bevington were the councillors elected. Oscar Patry was appointed secretary-treasurer and Ernest Meaden was appointed assistant secretary-treasurer.

Throughout the winter of 1961-62, a new office was constructed in Morinville for both the Municipal and School Administration and was

ready for occupancy on May 18, 1962. During the month of January 1962 the County of Sturgeon No. 15 was saddened by the death of the secretary-treasurer Oscar Patry, and a week later by the death of assistant secretary-treasurer Ernest Meaden. A special council meeting was called and Mrs. Jean McFadden was appointed acting secretary-treasurer. She served as such until March 15, 1962 when Alphonse Nobert, having resigned from council and replaced by Roy Como, was appointed secretary-treasurer and Mrs. J. McFadden was made assistant secretary-treasurer.

Pursuant to the County Act, after four years of administration as a County, proprietary electors are entitled to request a plebiscite to see if the majority are in favour of continuing with the County administration or to revert to the former system of administration. Such a plebiscite was held in the spring of 1965. By Order in Council, on July 12, 1965 the County's administration was discontinued and the area reverted to the former Municipal District of Sturgeon No. 90 and the Sturgeon School Division No. 24 status. An election was held, electing as the first Council: S. Walker (Reeve), G. Wilson, L. Rye, W. Flynn, L. Kluthe, W. Van de Walle, and D. Bevington. Mr. A. Nobert was appointed as secretary-treasurer with Mrs. Jean Rice as assistant secretary-treasurer.

The status of the Municipal District of Sturgeon did not change much after 1966, but a number of annexations altered its size. All the towns within the

Council Members

Order in Council dated April 23, 1997 (O.C. 156/97) changed the name "The Municipal District of Sturgeon No. 90" to "Sturgeon County".									
	1977, 1978, 1979 & 1980	1981, 1982 & 1983	1984 & 1985	1986, 1987 & 1988	1989, 1990 & 1991	1992, 1993 & 1994	1995, 1996 & 1997	1998	1999, 2000, 2001
									Election: Oct./98
Division 1	Hubert Lamoureux	Hubert Lamoureux Clayton Crozier (R) 1982	Hubert Lamoureux	Hubert Lamoureux	Hubert Lamoureux (DR)	Walter Buck (DR)	Walter Buck (DR)	Helmut Hinteregger	Helmut Hinteregger
Division 2	Clayton Crozier		Clayton Crozier (R)	Clayton Crozier (R)	Graeme MacKay	Jack Pearce	Graeme MacKay	Graeme MacKay	Graeme MacKay
Division 3	William Flynn (R)	Gilbert Soetaert	Gilbert Soetaert	Gilbert Soetaert	Ernie Oginsky	Wendy Miller	Gilbert Soetaert	Gilbert Soetaert	Gilbert Soetaert
Division 4	Glen Berry	Frank Schoenberger	Frank Schoenberger	Frank Schoenberger	Frank Schoenberger (R)	Frank Schoenberger (R)	Frank Schoenberger (R)	Frank Schoenberger (R)	Frank Schoenberger (R)
Division 5	Lawrence Kluthe	Maurice Remillard	Maurice Remillard	Maurice Remillard	Maurice Remillard	Jerry Kaup	Jerry Kaup	Jerry Kaup	Jerry Kaup
Division 6	Walter Van de Walle	Keith Everitt (R) 1981	Keith Everitt	Keith Everitt	Keith Everitt	Cal Putnam	Cal Putnam	Ken Gwozdiz	Ron Kohle (Mar. 29/99-May 24/01); no by-election held; election Oct. 15/01
Division 7	Walter Jerram	Walter Jerram	Aksel Porshild (resigned Mar. 31/85)	Alec Bochanesky	Alec Bochanesky	Vic Pasay	Vic Pasay	Vic Pasay	Vic Pasay
Division 8	Walter Wolansky	Alec Bochanesky	Alec Bochanesky						
	2002, 2003, 2004	2005, 2006, 2007	2008, 2009, 2010						
	Election: Oct 15/01	Election: Oct. 18/04	Election: Oct. 15/07						
Division 1	Helmut Hinteregger	Graeme MacKay	Don McGeachy						
Division 2	Graeme MacKay	Mark Oberg	Mark Oberg						
Division 3	Mark Oberg	Ken McGillis	Ken McGillis						
Division 4	Paul Kolesar	Jerry Kaup	Jerry Kaup						
Division 5	Jerry Kaup	Donald Rigney	Joe Milligan						
Division 6	Donald Rigney	Vic Pasay	Karen Shaw						
Division 7	Vic Pasay								
Mayor	Lawrence Kluthe	Helmut Hinteregger	Donald Rigney						

Municipal District of Sturgeon provided for future expansions, and jointly with the municipality, annexed lands to facilitate the growth. The largest annexation was granted January 1, 1982 to the City of Edmonton. The annexation consisted of approximately 30,000 acres and approximately \$10,000,000.00 loss of assessment. Annual loss of revenue was estimated at \$2,000,000.00. Alberta Municipal Affairs derived a formula whereby part of the revenue loss would be paid back to the municipalities over a five-year period.

September 1, 1977 was the date of a land transfer from the County of Thorhild to the Municipal District of Sturgeon. Approximately 65,000 acres, with total assessment of approximately \$12,000,000.00, which included the Imperial Oil Fertilizer Plant, transferred to the Municipal District of Sturgeon by an order of the provincial government. With the additional area, council increased the electoral divisions from seven to eight.

During the 1970's rural ratepayers were not generally concerned with elections; therefore many councillors were re-elected or returned by acclamation. This was the situation with the Municipal District of Sturgeon council, which consisted of councillors: Hubert Lamoureux, Clayton Crozier, William Flynn, Glenn Berry, Lawrence Kluthe, Walter Van de Walle and Walter Jerram. Little or no change took place until the election of 1980. In this election five (5) new councillors were elected. During 1981 the position of secretary-treasurer was re-designated. Mr. Gilbert Boddez was appointed municipal administrator with municipal secretary Grace Roy, as assistant, other positions were re-evaluated and implemented.

Special recognition is given to the following individuals who contributed many years of service to our local government: William Flynn (27 years), Walter Van de Walle (23 years), Stanley Walker (22 years), Lawrence Kluthe (15 years), Lawrence Rye (14 years), Alphonse Nobert (15 years) and Robert Stack (40 years). To those who have not been recorded but who have served our district in various capacities, we also pay tribute.

On April 23, 1997 an Order in Council changed the name of "The Municipal District of Sturgeon No. 90" to "Sturgeon County". Appointment of Reeve from within council to Mayor at Large occurred October 15, 2001.

Sturgeon County Administrators were: Alphonse Nobert (March 1962 to January 1977), Gilbert Boddez (January 1977 to January 1998), and Larry Kirkpatrick, County Commissioner (January 1998 to present).

Records show that in 1900 the budget was: Revenue \$135.75; Expenditures – \$151.30; Deficit – \$15.55. In 1966 the budget was: Revenue – \$1,703,846.79; Expenditures – \$1,664,569.45; Surplus – \$39,277.34. In the year 2005 the financial statement for Sturgeon County shows total receipts of nearly \$30 million! Quite a difference from that of \$135.75 in the year 1900!

Today Sturgeon County is a vibrant community of just under 20,000 people. The 2006 statistics show a population of 18,621 living in 6,302 dwellings, a 3.1% increase from 2001. It is comprised of the following communities – Towns: Bon Accord, Gibbons, Legal, Morinville, Redwater – Hamlets: Alcomdale, Calahoo, Carbondale, Cardiff, Lamoureux, Mearns, Namao, Pine Sands, Riviere Qui Barre and Villeneuve. The local economy consists of a balance of farmland and industry, with many residents employed in the larger nearby centres including the cities of Edmonton and St. Albert.

Grain Elevators in the Area

Mearns Grain Elevators

By Dan Brenneis

The first elevator in Mearns was built in 1925 by Topper Grain Co., a small grain company with about 20 elevators mainly in northern Alberta. Topper Grain Co. merged with eight other companies in 1929 to become Federal Grain Co. but the Mearns elevator was owned by Alberta Pacific Grain Company. Later Alberta Pacific was taken over by Federal Grain and the Mearns site was purchased by United Grain Growers (UGG). The elevator



Tearing down the elevators in Mearns. The top of the original Alberta Pacific (now UGG) grain elevator is gone and the second elevator awaits the same fate

managers were: Ike Houle until 1943, Clement C. (Clem) Lavallee from 1943 to 1946, and Charles (Charlie) Pelletier from 1946 to 1966.

The first UGG elevator was re-built in Mearns in 1928 using material from a closed Morinville elevator. The UGG managers were: J. Lamarr, February 17, 1928 to March 22, 1929 • J.N. Ricard, March 22, 1929 to June 4, 1929 • A.C. Milne, August 21, 1929 to January 30, 1930 • B.P. McKinnon, June 30, 1930 to May 12, 1932 • Doyle W. Cochlin, May 12, 1932 to April 20, 1943 • L. Letourneau, April 20, 1943 to July 6, 1943 • Hugh F. Kennedy, July 6, 1943 to July 26, 1957 • Ludick Banack, July 26, 1957 to July 31, 1972.

Dan Brenneis operated the elevator on a part time basis from 1972 to 1979 when the elevators were sold to be dismantled.

Alcomdale Grain Elevators

By Dan Brenneis

The first elevator in Alcomdale was built by Voss Brothers in 1919 for Gillespie Grain with J.F.D. Morin as manager. William (Billy) Jorgenson was the second grain buyer from 1922 to 1923, followed by Albert O'Brien. Some time later Voss Brothers built another elevator, this one for the Federal Grain Co. In 1943 United Grain Growers



Original Gillespie elevator in Alcomdale, May 1931

purchased both of these elevators. The UGG managers at Alcomdale were: Fred Duncan, March 8, 1943 to March 18, 1946. Fred had been with Gillespie Grain prior to the UGG purchase and continued in that elevator • Richard Whitson, June 15, 1943 to October 27, 1943. Richard operated the No. 2 elevator during this period and then left for the RCAF during WWII • Fred Duncan operated both elevators from October 27, 1943 to March 18, 1946 • Richard Whitson, March 18, 1946 to May 20, 1949 • Walter Alpaugh, May 20, 1949 to May 30, 1951 • Dan Brenneis, May 30, 1951 to July 1, 1971 (one year leave of absence) • D.E. Schneider, July 1, 1971 to July 12, 1972 • Dan Brenneis, July 21, 1972 to August 30, 1992 • Bill Munter, September 1, 1992 to July 1993.

In 1972 a large annex was added to the No. 1 Elevator when the old Gillespie Elevator was torn down. The remaining elevator was closed in 1993 and torn down and burned in 1994.



The second UGG elevator in Alcomdale. The annex was built from the wood of the original Gillespie elevator



The remaining UGG elevator is toppled in 1972

Grain Elevators

By Lorette (Pelletier) Bruce

Sources: Information came from stories and websites: Elevators.woodengrainelevators.com; en.wikipedia.org/wiki/grain_elevator; www.flickr.com/

photos/albertarailwaymuseum.ca; www.royalalbertamuseum.ca, Finding Our Way Home; www.theCanadianencyclopedia.com

Who hasn't driven down a prairie highway searching the horizon anxiously for that row of grain elevators that signified home? Canadians have long identified the grain elevator with the prairies and, for those living in Alberta's farming communities, the elevator gave a sense of purpose.

During the first decades of the 20th century, railway lines criss-crossed the prairies like spiderwebs. Springing up closely behind were standard designed elevators built by grain companies, and hamlets and villages took root adjacent to the grain elevators. Constructed on land leased from the railways, the elevators rose every eight to ten miles – a day's travel for a farmer using a horse and wagon. By 1934 the number of elevators in Alberta peaked at 1,755.

Why build grain elevators?

Getting grain into railway boxcars was first done by farmers shovelling their grain into 2-bushel sacks, which they then transported to a loading platform along the rail line. There, they emptied the sacks into a waiting boxcar, a back breaking and time consuming job. The industry needed a means of storing and shipping grain quickly, and the small, one-storey wood frame warehouses erected by farmers were inefficient.

The Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) demanded larger warehouses. By offering land rent free the railway encouraged private companies to build standard 25,000 bushel elevators complete with a steam or gasoline engine and equipment to clean grain. Hundreds of grain elevators were built to these specifications.

There were three kinds of grain elevators; country, transfer and terminal. The small elevators at railway sidings within easy reach of nearby farms were called country elevators or primary elevators. Transfer elevators were at centres such as Calgary, Edmonton and Saskatoon to supply regional markets. Terminal elevators were at port cities such as Vancouver, Montreal and Thunder Bay to load grain into ships for the eastern Canadian and overseas markets.

Why do grain elevators look the way they do?

Although there was considerable variation in shape and storage capacity among the earliest elevators in Alberta, the traditional 30,000 to 40,000 bushel elevator with a gabled roof and a gable-roofed cupola became the norm in the 1920s. Elevators were vertical to take advantage of the pull

of gravity and the fluidity of grain. To elevate the grain a mechanism known as the "leg" was devised. The leg was an endless belt with cups or scoops attached that elevated the grain for distribution to the storage bins. Generally a 33 foot x 32 foot elevator would be over 80 feet high. Although the roof line varied from pyramidal to gable on some of the earliest elevators, the wood crib construction was universal. The first elevator in Alberta was built in 1896 in Strathcona and had a pyramidal roof and cupola.



The "leg" behind Charlie shows the metal buckets that scooped up the grain and carried it to the top of the elevator where it was directed to the chosen bin. The wheel above the door was used to direct the spout to the bin, 2006 photo

Building a grain elevator

Built beside the railway tracks, all elevators, despite variations in shape and bushel capacity, shared three architectural elements: the elevator, the driveway and the office/engine room with its walkway. An outhouse/fuel storage shed and coal and flour sheds were all considered part of the elevator. Grain companies drew up building plans but often contracted out the construction.

A dozen men might be needed to build an elevator and the crew would arrive on site prepared to stay a month or more. The first job was to lay the cement foundation pads followed by the walls. Because grain can weigh up to 60 pounds a bushel it was extremely important that the elevator be made strong enough to withstand the lateral pressure

placed on the bin walls. Wood crib construction employing either 2" x 6"s or 2" x 8"s laid flat and spiked together on the lower walls and 2" x 4"s on the upper section gave the elevator its formidable strength. As they built the walls the crew had to be careful not to "miss the cribbing" or let one side get ahead of the other in the overlap sequence. If this happened, the timbers had to be pried apart and the crew started over.

Elevators usually had nine or more large square or rectangular bins arranged in 3x3 or 3x4 or 4x4 or more patterns, a truck scale, a pit to unload the grain, a manlift to rise to the upper floors, hopper bins, and sometimes, additional grain storage annex bins on either side.



The manlift against the wall was counter weighted to the agent's weight to allow easy movement. A foot brake controlled the descent speed, 2006 photo

Once finished, the crew nailed on wood siding and sawed the overlapping corners flush. Some companies preferred metal sheeting to wood siding. The crew's last job was to paint the entire structure. Until the late 1960s all elevators were painted CPR red except those that were metal clad. Later, companies chose corporate colours to identify their elevators.

The driveway, built separately from the elevator, was of frame construction. Because elevators ride up and down according to the weight of the grain inside, a "telescope" or framed sleeve was constructed 24 inches above the driveway roof to allow the elevator to rise or fall independently of the driveway.



Charlie Pelletier in the elevator office, 1980



Charlie beside the engine that ran the elevator. Agents pushed down on a rung of the fly wheel with one foot while heaving on the outside of the wheel with two hands to get enough momentum to start the engine. This engine is smaller than the original ones. 2006 photo

The office, typically measuring 18 feet x 22 feet, was located about 20 feet from the elevator. The engine that moved all the pulleys and belts in the elevator was located in the basement and the belt from the engine to the elevator was enclosed in a wooden walkway that was used to get from the elevator to the office. The risk of fire meant that most offices were metal clad though some were made of brick. The engine was started by moving a huge flywheel with enough power to kick start the motor. The elevator manager put one foot on a bottom rung and two hands on the outside of the flywheel then heaved the wheel downward.

An interesting problem the old elevators had

was that of silo explosions. Fine powder from the millions of grains passing through the facility would accumulate and mix with the oxygen in the air. A spark could spread from one floating grain to the other creating a chain reaction that would destroy the entire structure (this dispersed-fuel explosion is the mechanism behind fuel-air bombs). To prevent this, elevators today still need very rigorous rules against smoking or any other open flame. Many elevators also have various devices installed to maximize ventilation, safeguards against overheating in belt conveyors, legs and bearings, and explosion-proof electrical devices such as electric motors, switches and lighting.

How elevators work

Country elevators have three main functions. They are designed to receive, store and ship grain in bulk.

RECEIVING When a farmer (grain producer) delivers grain to an elevator, the grain truck is driven up the elevator driveway and onto a scale (1). The elevator agent (manager) weighs the truck on a government inspected scale. The weight of the truck is recorded on a Canadian Grain Commission approved ticket.

The truck is unloaded by either an elevator hoist or a hoist on the farmers' truck. The front end of the truck is raised so that the grain flows out of the back of the truck box, through a grate in the scale, and into a collection area called a pit (2). This area is known as the front pit. When the truck is empty, it is re-weighed. The difference between the full and

empty truck is the weight of the grain delivered, and this figure is recorded in the producers' delivery permit book.

An average sample of grain is taken by the elevator manager as the grain is pouring from the truck into the pit. The manager must determine a number of things before storing the grain: What is the grade and dockage of the grain delivered? Is the grain free of infestation and contamination? What is the moisture content of the grain? In just a few minutes an elevator manager will determine the grade of the grain and if it is suitable for storage.

STORAGE From the pit, the grain is moved into storage. The elevator manager directs the grain either to an empty bin, or to one containing similar grain. A spout at the top of the elevator is positioned so the grain is elevated into the proper bin. After selecting the bin and adjusting the spout, the elevator manager starts the head drive motor (9). The motor drives an endless belt that lifts the grain in cups attached to the belt in an enclosed leg (3). The grain is carried to the top of the elevator and as it goes over a large pulley, it is dumped into the distributor (4), which directs the grain through a spout (5) into a pre-selected bin. All the bins in a grain elevator are numbered, and the elevator manager records the type and grade of grain in each bin on a bin chart. When large volumes of grain are delivered it is necessary to store grain in the annex. Grain may be placed in the annex from any portion of the elevator or directly from a delivery truck.

SHIPPING Nearly all the grain shipped from a country elevator leaves by rail. The shipping process begins when one or a number of boxcars are spotted on a rail line at the back of the elevator. When the wooden boxcars were used to transport grain, the car had to be cleaned and repaired if necessary. Then, wooden doors were laid lengthwise in front of the steel doors. The wood doors were made to fit one onto the other to rise above the top of the steel doors and were nailed in place. Brown paper was then stapled over the whole door to seal any small leaks. The boxcars had large sliding doors on each side of the car so this process would need to be done to both sides. The boxcar side facing the elevator was left open at the very top so the loading spout could be pushed into the car. On the new hopper cars there are no doors to seal with wood and paper and the loading spout is placed in the top of the car.

The elevator manager sets the distributor (4) to channel grain to the loading spout (6), selects the bin (7) to draw the grain from and begins the loading operation. The grain is then taken from the bin and dropped into the hopper scale (8) where it is weighed and lowered into the back pit. The

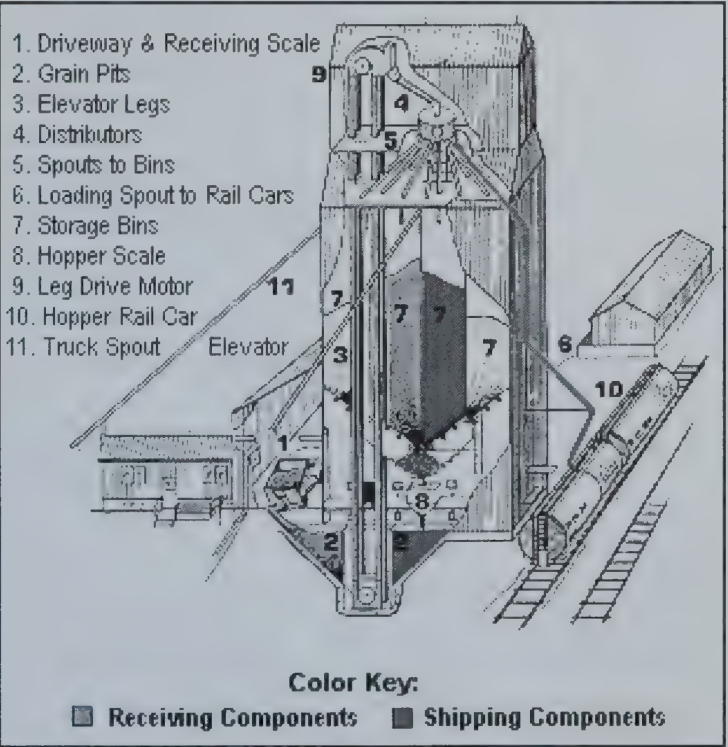


Diagram of how a grain elevator works

elevation leg (3) lifts the grain to the top of the elevator and drops it into the distributor, which directs it to the loading spout and into the grain car.

When the car is loaded with the required amount of grain, the car is closed and the hatches are sealed with a numbered metal strip. The loaded car number and the amount of grain are recorded with the grain company and the railway, and the car is picked up by a passing train.

New technology

To remain competitive grain companies constantly upgrade elevators: electrical equipment replaced gasoline engines; truck-dumping mechanisms were improved; larger scales were built; larger and longer movable loading spouts were installed to load hopper cars; metal “legs” replaced wooden ones; new driveways were constructed to accommodate longer trucks; two legs were installed to allow unloading trucks and loading rail cars to happen at the same time; computers were installed in some points to relay accounts and automatically operate the elevator and new designs like a “mobile elevator” to receive and process grain at the farm were developed and tried in the 1990s. Research continues for the best way to handle grain.

The grain trade

The grain company markets oilseeds and feed grains. They buy grain from farmers through the elevator agent either for cash or at a contracted price, and then sell futures contracts for the same quantity of grain, usually each day. They profit through the narrowing basis, that is, the difference between the local cash price, and the futures price that occurs at certain times of the year. They also communicate with the producer through publications and workshops, and co-operate with Departments of Agriculture on developing better quality cereal crops. The Canadian Wheat Board, responsible for the marketing of wheat and barley, controls all grain transport.

The elevator agent, as the grain buyer, was the initial link in a process that handled the grain from the producer’s truck to worldwide markets. Like the elevators, an agent was central to his community and being an elevator agent was a way of life that moved with the seasonal rhythm of the farming community in which he lived. Agents volunteered in their community and surrounding communities, their families were educated in the communities and they were involved in the local events. The elevator agent worked to develop a good rapport with and the trust of his customers and stood beside them through good times and bad. Every farmer had a

story of how his agent managed to mix off a tough load of grain to provide a better grade or how he magically found room in a “plugged elevator” for that one last load. Agents would open the elevator early in the morning and keep it open late at night to accommodate the farmers’ needs. The farmer and agent relationship was a partnership that resulted in mutual trust and in many cases, lifelong friendships.

Although the elevator agent’s job was to deal in grain they also sold flour, coal and binder twine. Today, agents store and sell fertilizers and herbicides and advise on their application. They dispense market advice and arrange for producer cars for customers. Maintenance of the elevator and paper work is another aspect of daily routine. In addition, the agent now spends hours in front of a computer screen keeping up with international markets.

Evolution

The elevators and train stations were the cornerstone around which the communities evolved. We have now come full circle and ironically the elevators and railroads that once breathed life into the communities are now responsible for their demise. As elevators are shut down and the rail lines are abandoned and removed, rural communities suffer and deteriorate.

Shifts in population from the countryside to the cities, improved roads, and mechanized farm equipment were trends that began as early as the 1930s, but accelerated after World War II. Fewer people worked larger farms. Since the 1960s both the transportation and grain industries have been streamlining and consolidating their businesses in an effort to cut costs to remain competitive. The consolidation of delivery points has seen the upgrading of some elevators and the construction of large capacity terminals made of cement. In the 1990s deregulation of the railways, the demise of the Crow rate and a move by the grain companies to position themselves globally led to the construction of high throughput terminals. Their capability of handling 52-car trains means that now the terminals have to be built far beyond town limits.

In 1933 there were 5,485 country elevators in Western Canada. By 1981 the number had dropped to 3,324 and by 1991 it was reduced again to 1,578. August 2003 numbers show 389 remaining elevators in Western Canada. In Alberta there were 1,651 elevators in 1951. By the end of the 1996-1997 crop year there were 327 elevators remaining.

It is inevitable that before another decade passes there will be no more wooden “prairie sentinels” around for our future generations to see.

Telephones and Utilities

Mearns Rural Electric Association Ltd. (R.E.A.)

History from Decades of the Independence District

According to the minutes of the Mearns R.E.A. Ltd., the first general meeting was held in the Parish Hall at Mearns on October 16, 1950. Approximately 120 people were present representing Alcomdale, Busby, Mearns and Riviere Qui Barre districts. Mr. John Stevens chaired this meeting and a Mr. Larry Speers from Calgary Power Ltd. was the speaker. Mr. Speers gave a resume of the costs of line construction, electricity and rates for subscribers. Ninety percent of the people at this meeting voted in favor of taking power. Mr. Colin Ross of St. Albert spoke on the co-op setup.

A provisional board was nominated, having two directors from each district:

Alcomdale – Arthur Ellett and Paul Hermanutz

Mearns – Walter Ellett and Joe Kluthe

Busby – Lloyd McMillan and Walter Grenier

Riviere Qui Barre – John Stevens and Firmin DeVolder

John Stevens was elected president and Walter Ellett as secretary. Meetings and interviews continued for the ground work and at the April 1951 meeting it was agreed that the association be known as the Mearns Rural Electric Co-op Association Ltd. A Board of Directors was nominated for this. The former list remained with the exception of Myron Davidson who replaced Arthur Ellett, and Rene Bourbonnais was added. The president and secretary remained the same respectively. The first annual meeting of the Mearns R.E.A. was held April 29, 1953 at Mearns, with 90 members present.

Brushing for the power lines was to be done by the farmers, and the directors were responsible for

canvassing their areas for subscribers. Power was turned on in April of 1953.

In February 1983 Beryl Bailey wrote: Mearns Rural Electrification Association ended 32 years of operation on January 25, 1982 when its members decided to transfer their assets to Trans Alta Utilities. During the month of June, 250 members shared in transfer settlement of approximately \$344.



An old windmill still stands on Robert Altmiks' farm next to a modern day power transformer

CODE		YOUR METER READING		CONSUMPTION	MULTIPLIER	GROSS AMOUNT	NET AMOUNT
EC. ENERGY CHARGE	AR. ARREARS	PRESENT	PREVIOUS				
OC. OPERATING CHARGE	CR. CREDIT						
DA. DEPOSIT ACCOUNT	TS. TRAILER SERVICE						
AD. ASSOCIATION DUES	B. BRUSHING						
NAME AND ADDRESS		1					
RICHARD FREIDRICH						150	150
R R 2						690	600
MORINVILLE ALTA				2030	1200	1660	1660
						150	150
DAY MONTH DAY MONTH		DAY MONTH YEAR		SEC.		AREA ACCOUNT NO.	
11031006		170762		3803		970	
FROM TO		DISCOUNT EXPIRES		TOTALS		2650 2560	
BILLING PERIOD				PLEASE DISREGARD "ARREARS" IF NOW PAID		THIS AMOUNT PAYABLE AFTER DISCOUNT DATE THIS AMOUNT PAYABLE PRIOR TO DISCOUNT DATE	

Farm Electric Services Ltd. bill for a three month period, 1962

COMPLETE
IN
DUPLICATE

FORM "A" (Section 9)

MEMBER'S LIEN NOTE

I, NICK W. BYER of ALCOMDALE, in the Province of
Alberta, Farmer, a member of the MEARNS Rural Electrification
Association, Limited, hereby promise to pay to the MEARNS
Rural Electrification Association, Limited, within TEN years from the 15TH
day of SEPT. A.D. 1954, being the day from which interest shall be
computed, the following sum, that is 1060.00 dollars, (hereinafter called the
principal), with interest at the rate of three and one-half per cent per annum, the
principal to be repayable in instalments as follows:

1st instalment	<u>106.00</u>	dollars on the	<u>15TH</u>	day of	<u>SEPT.</u>	19 <u>55</u>
2nd instalment	<u>106.00</u>	dollars on the	<u>15TH</u>	day of	<u>"</u>	19 <u>56</u>
3rd instalment	<u>106.00</u>	dollars on the	<u>15TH</u>	day of	<u>"</u>	19 <u>57</u>
4th instalment	<u>106.00</u>	dollars on the	<u>15TH</u>	day of	<u>"</u>	19 <u>58</u>
5th instalment	<u>106.00</u>	dollars on the	<u>15TH</u>	day of	<u>"</u>	19 <u>59</u>
6th instalment	<u>106.00</u>	dollars on the	<u>15TH</u>	day of	<u>"</u>	19 <u>60</u>
7th instalment	<u>106.00</u>	dollars on the	<u>15TH</u>	day of	<u>"</u>	19 <u>61</u>
8th instalment	<u>106.00</u>	dollars on the	<u>15TH</u>	day of	<u>"</u>	19 <u>62</u>
9th instalment	<u>106.00</u>	dollars on the	<u>15TH</u>	day of	<u>"</u>	19 <u>63</u>
10th instalment	<u>106.00</u>	dollars on the	<u>15TH</u>	day of	<u>"</u>	19 <u>64</u>

together with accrued interest on the unpaid principal on each of the above dates.

Until otherwise advised in writing by the Secretary of the said Association, I shall pay
the above instalments when due to the Secretary-Treasurer of the MEARNS

Rural Electrification Association, Limited, at MORINVILLE, in the Province
of Alberta.

DESCRIPTION OF LAND: S.E. 1/4 SECTION 3 TOWNSHIP 57 RANGE 26 W 4 M.

Dated at MORINVILLE, in the province of Alberta, this 21ST day of JULY
1954.

Nick W. Byer
SIGNATURE OF MEMBER

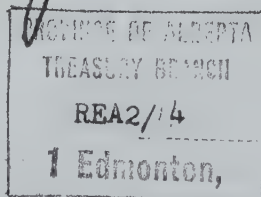
THE ABOVE WAS MADE AND SIGNED IN MY PRESENCE)

BY THE SAID Nick W. Byer)

THIS 21 DAY OF July 1954)

Walter Edlett
SIGNATURE OF OFFICER

MEARNS
RURAL ELECTRIFICATION ASSOCIATION, LTD.



At a final meeting of the Board of Mearns R.E.A. held in September, it was decided to donate the remaining balance of the treasury to the four 4-H clubs in the area. Four cheques of \$80 each have been sent to the three 4-H Clubs of Riviere Qui Barre Beef, Light Horse and Sewing and also to the Alcomdale 4-H Beef Club.

In 2007 the electricity enjoyed in our homes and other buildings is provided by Epcor and is handled by FortisAlberta. The billing includes delivery charges. Electric energy charges are approximately 10 cents per kWh. Beats keeping lanterns and candles lit!

Telephone Service in the District

By Janet (Nobert) Macdonald

According to information gathered from Decades of the Independence District, early records indicate that the toll office at Seymour, set up in 1911, was the earliest telephone communication in the area and was operated by Mr. T.R. Lovelock

until he moved to Alcomdale in 1919. In May 1920 Mr. Lovelock installed a toll office in his Alcomdale store. The office at Seymour continued until September of 1937 and was then replaced by a pay station service connected with Morinville.

In 1927-28 the provincial government brought telephone service into the area with Mr. Stanley Whitson heading the project and gathering signatures from all those who wanted a telephone installed. Tim Whitson and his brother measured the lanes of each farm before the line and poles could go in. The monthly cost was around \$2.50.

During the Depression, the government felt that this was not a paying situation and sent a representative from their head office in Red Deer to meet with the Alcomdale area residents. From this meeting, which took place January 31, 1936, the Morinville Mutual Telephone Company was formed and shares sold to the subscribers. Mr. Wm. Kenneally, representing A.G.T., was the guest speaker.

Mr. George Timney became the president and



Share certificate from the Morinville Mutual Telephone Company

Mr. Tom Harrington the secretary. Two other board members were Mr. J.L. Mitchell and Mr. S.L. Whitson. Mrs. Eva Aslin became secretary in 1937, followed later by Mr. J. Tellier, Mrs. Rosalie Collins, Mrs. B. Lavallee, Mrs. Margaret Ellett and Mrs. Orpha Benson. Over time, Mr. J. Mitchell replaced Mr. G. Timney as president, followed by Albert Wolfe, then Archie Cameron.

The monthly rent for the telephone was set at \$1.25. There were six circuits and 46 telephones the first year. The lineman was Willis Collins. In 1965 Cardiff was included with Morinville under the Morinville Mutual.

With the implementation of the A.G.T. Rural Buried Cable program, the Morinville Mutual Telephone Company was absorbed by A.G.T. and four party dial service commenced in August of 1966.

The party line system remained in place well into the 1970s. One of the accomplishments of the Alberta Progressive Conservative government under the leadership of Premier Don Getty (1985-92) was to finally provide private telephone lines for rural Albertans.

In 1990 A.G.T. was privatized by the provincial government and became known as TELUS Communications. The era of government-owned telecommunications carriers in Alberta ended in 1995 when TELUS purchased Ed Tel from the City of Edmonton for \$467 million dollars.

TELUS went through a reorganization period when it merged with BC Tel in 1999 and is at present the largest telecommunications provider in Western Canada, and the second largest in Canada, next to Bell Canada.

Today, a number of wireless providers are at work in rural Alberta, extending fixed wireless high-speed services. Alberta wireless providers are indicating an interest in building their networks to rural areas and in working with rural wireless co-ops to provide service, similar to the rural telephone co-ops that existed prior to AGT.

The marvels of technology are great and today the world is at our doorstep. We have indeed come a long way!

Telephones, Then and Now

Submitted by R.G. Nobert

Having a phone in the Morinville area three generations ago was an entirely different matter than today where cell phones, half the size of a deck of cards, can direct dial to almost anywhere in the world. And they also take pictures; make movies, play music, list information, and God only knows

what all! I have one, but I'm barely past the "Hello stage" with the very complicated thing! By mistake, I took an ugly picture of myself and now I don't know how to get rid of it! Each time I open up that cell phone, I have to look at that ugly face on what appears to be a miniature TV screen. Such things were totally impossible 40 years ago!

Back in the 40s, 50s and 60s, rural roads were lined with telephone poles that carried at least two wires. The poles along Hwy 44 were T-shaped, and held many sets of wires. The remnants of those types of poles and wires can still be seen today along the local CNR railway. They were used for sending telegrams. Those poles form a double-T by having two horizontal three inch by five inch by six foot 'insulator bars' that supported about 10 wires per bar, complete with a glass insulator for each wire. Have a look at those lines still there along that track today. They haven't been used for many decades, but they show the scenes that were along many country roads prior to 1968, when the entire old system was replaced by underground telephone cables.

Prior to modern cable service, a phone in the country was a strange luxury. Often a dozen people or more used the same wire or "party-line" that went all the way to Morinville where the central operating station was located. All calls, except those for the Morinville district, were long distance. I don't know how many party-lines went to the Morinville station. There could have been well over a hundred of them, considering all the party-lines within the town too. Getting or making a phone call was an entirely different matter back then. To begin, phones were relatively huge. Their mechanisms were contained in nicely finished hardwood boxes measuring about twenty inches high, by ten inches wide, by eight inches deep. They were mounted on the wall about five feet off the floor with a fixed speaker, about as big as a cup, in the center of the whole thing. If you were too short to reach it, you had to use a chair or stool to speak into it. The receiver, located on the left side of the phone, was about the size and weight of a full pop can. It was hung on a U-shaped three-inch cradle that was also the switch. It went on when you lifted the receiver.

When one lifted the receiver it was customary to ask, "Is the line busy?" The old wooden phones had no dials or dial tones. Often you'd lift the receiver; hear nothing, but still ask the mandatory question of "Is the line busy?" and somebody already on the party-line would say, "Yes". And so, until that person was done, you had to wait. Courtesy said you hung up and didn't listen in on the conversation. However, if the line was free, you could do one of

two different kinds of calls. You could ring for someone on your party-line, or ring for the central operator for any other local or long distance call. Party-line phones didn't simply ring. They had all kinds of rings that were activated by a little hand crank on the right side of the phone box. It actually turned a small generator made of horseshoe magnets. The unit measured about four by five by six inches. The phones had two batteries. Each one was about three inches in diameter and about six inches high. They were only used to energize the speaker and receiver. It was the hand-activated generator that made all the bells of all the phones of the party-line ring at the same time. There were two kinds of rings; 'long rings' and 'short rings'. A couple of turns or more of the crank produced a long ring, while perhaps only a half-turn of the crank produced a short ring. Each customer had their own special set of rings along with their phone number. Our phone number was 1005. It consisted of five short rings. Our neighbors, the Durands, had four shorts and a long; namely four short rings, followed by a long one. Their number was 1009.

When the phone rang years ago, it wasn't always for you. When one phone on the party-line would ring, all the others would ring too! There were all sorts of combinations of short or long rings. So, when asked for your phone number, you had to give two answers; the number plus the combination of rings it represented like 'two shorts and a long', 'two longs', 'five shorts' etc. You had to ring those special combinations to call someone on your party-line. A universal emergency ring was one very long ring. That would get everyone on the party-line picking up their phone to find out who needed help.

All other calls to people not on your party-line required that you press a small button on the left side of the phone while you spun the crank to get hold of the operator in Morinville, who was called 'central'. She'd say, "Number please" and you would tell her the number you wanted to reach. Someone trying to call our place would say, "one double-0 five." She'd then manually connect that person's line to our line at her switchboard then ring five shorts, which everybody on our line would hear. And if they felt curious, they could pick up their receiver to listen in to what your call was all about. Sometimes they'd dare to cut in and speak as well!

Having a party-line possibly saved my father's house from a fire in 1946. My parents were gone and our 16 year old cousin, Rachel, was there as our babysitter. When the icehouse, (located only 30 feet from the house), caught on fire, Rachel got on the phone and began ringing every kind of short and long combination she could think of. She was a

country girl and a darn smart one too. Within no time most of our neighbors came to fight the fire. They were soon hand pumping like the devil to fill buckets of water from the well. The icehouse burned down, but thanks to our good neighbors, the house was saved. There were no fire trucks to be called back then.

Another party-line story has to do with another babysitter who was just a small boy. At the time, he was still unable to recognize the distinct ring of 1009, namely, four short rings followed by a long one. So, for some time, little Lawrence Durand would answer the phone each time it rang, to then ask, "Are you calling one double-0 nine?" He was my boyhood friend, and I remember my mother telling me about his first phone experiences on our party-line.

When I became a young man in 1964, I got quite a shock one day when I rang for the operator. I was expecting the usual, "Number please." She instead said, "Hi honey." Had the phone not been attached to the wall, I might have dropped it! Silly me! I had forgotten that the girl I had been dating had just got a new job as a central operator in Morinville.

Such is life. Never in the history of the human race have so many changes taken place in such a relatively short period of time!

West Sturgeon Gas Co-op

History from Decades of the Independence District
(1981)

In 1967 a ratepayers meeting was called at Riviere Qui Barre to discuss gas installation in the new Camilla School. Plains Western proposed installing gas into the school and to serve farms along the line east of town. The previous year Plains Western had served all farms east of Highway 2 at a cost of \$750.00 per customer. The area west of the highway felt they should receive the same service. It was proposed that rather than just the school being served, that the farmers requesting gas should also have attention. At this meeting a steering committee was set up to look into the feasibility of all farms in the Municipal District of Sturgeon receiving gas, if requested. The names on this committee were: Angus McGillis, Angus McDonnell, Allen McDonnell, Roy Como, Roy Schmermund, Ruth Kenneth (later replaced by James Tomten) and Archie Cameron.

By the end of the year Plains Western wasn't interested in serving the whole area and it was decided to form a co-op under the direction of Palmer Engineering. After several meetings with Palmer Engineering a figure of \$1,500 was reached and cost per installation and signing of customers proceeded at that figure.



One of many mulehead pumps found throughout Sturgeon County

Somewhere along the line proposals were received from two gas companies. Northwest Utilities proposed absorbing the area south of the correction line under their own name. Plains Western proposed partnership with West Sturgeon to operate and serve the area west and north of Highway 2, through townships 55-56 and part of 57. This proposal was accepted and West Sturgeon went into partnership with Plains Western. A few years later the government requested the co-op to extend their franchise to cross Highway 2 to take in the Legal and Bon Accord areas.

At an annual meeting in April of 1969 it was agreed that the co-op board would consist of seven members. The elected members at this meeting were: Angus McDonnell, president; Archie Cameron, secretary; and directors; Ed Rivard, Lawrence Kluthe, James Tomten, Allen McDonnell and Ken McRae.

The board proceeded with plans to install the gas lines but eventually found the governance too restricting and decided to disband the Board and turn the entire project over to Plains Western. Cost was again discussed and the final cost to the farmers was approximately \$875.00.

With the installation of these gas lines, all homes were able to enjoy the benefits of natural gas for heating. Over the years, different companies



One of many gas-pumping stations found throughout Sturgeon County

have provided the service. After Plains Western it was Northwestern Utilities and then Centra Gas but at time of printing, gas is supplied to the area residents by AltaGas, headquartered in Leduc, Alberta. The base energy charge to the customer is 8.65 per GJ. There is also a delivery charge and an Alberta Government Natural Gas Rebate of \$2.09 per GJ. Changes in rates from time to time are subject to approval by the Alberta Energies and Utilities Board.

The Railroad

By Lorette (Pelletier) Bruce

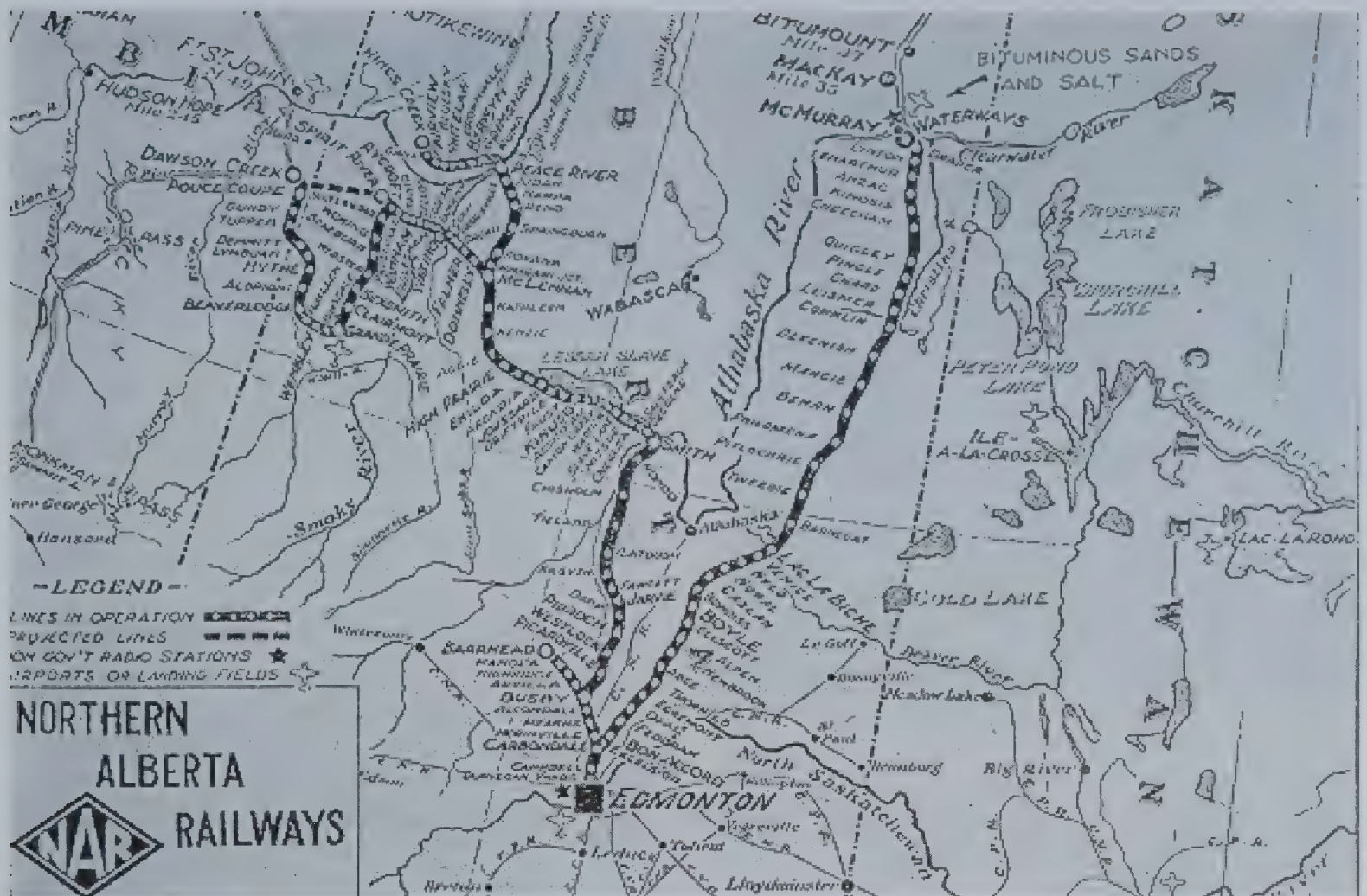
Sourced from various family stories and websites: Bruce Ramsey, PGE – Railway to the North. Mitchell Vancouver, 1962; <http://railways-atlas.tapor.uablerta.ca/cocoon/atlas/Chapters-11-5/>

The Edmonton, Dunvegan and British Columbia Railway (ED&BC) was an early pioneer railway in northwestern Alberta, designed to open up the Peace River district. It was preceded by a promotional railway known as the Athabasca Railway, which was floated in the 1910s during the heady days of Canadian railway expansion. On paper it was to strike out from Edmonton northwestward to Peace River country, over Pine Pass and eventually reach Prince George, British Columbia. Fires, flood, strikes and other mishaps plagued the line in its early years and the ED&BC was chided as the “Exceedingly Dangerous and Badly Constructed Railway”.

The company was rechartered in 1911 under the ownership of J.D. McArthur and construction of the ED&BC line started in 1912 from Edmonton heading toward Westlock, reaching High Prairie in 1914 and Spirit River in 1915. It was surmised by locals that the railway was built to haul logs from northern Alberta to McArthur’s huge sawmill located on the St. Albert Trail next to the Calder Railroad Yards. Track was laid through what are now Mearns and Alcomdale. At that time Busby did not exist and Independence was the local centre having a general store and a Post Office, both operated by Mr. John Shoveller.

As the railway progressed a townsite was surveyed every so many miles, usually about nine miles, the distance a horse and wagon could travel in a day, and a siding and station would be built and an agent installed. Busby and Mearns were the result of these railway-surveyed townsites. Roads were constructed on surveyed road allowances to the nearest railroad point. As a result, a lot of the old trails that were used for transportation were abandoned and eventually disappeared altogether.

About 1918 Dr. Alcombrack, a dentist, bought



NAR map

several quarters of land about five miles east of Independence, one of which, the SW 5-57-26-W4th, became the location for Alcomdale. He built a house just north of the railroad tracks. The railroad cut diagonally through SW of 5, leaving about sixty acres in the SW corner. There was a siding down the track near where Mearns is today. After some persuasion, the railroad company agreed to put a spur line on this piece of land and surveyed it into lots and streets. The company agreed to lay the steel if the local residents would lay the grade. Some of the donors of labour were George Moore, as foreman, Morris Byer and the Spargo brothers. Mr. Lovelock gave the railroad company the "right of way" over his property at Busby so that Busby could have a station. This was in exchange for the spur line leading to the elevators at Alcomdale. Dr. Alcombrack persuaded others to start businesses in the proposed town of Alcomdale, named after himself and pronounced All-com-dale.

In approximately 1927 the line to Barrhead was built and branched off the main line at Busby. For Busby, with the railway now the main transportation link, it was only natural that the commercial centre for the area would gravitate to the railway. Mr. Shoveller moved his store from Independence to

Busby and brought with him the Post Office with the name changed to Busby.

The various branch lines off the ED&BC main line were each built as separate Railway Companies, e.g. Carbondale to Waterways was The Alberta Great Waterways R.R., McLennan to Hines Creek via Peace River was the Central Canada R.R. The line from Busby to Barrhead was the Pembina Valley R.R., abbreviated to P.V.R.R. Locally the P.V. became translated as Pea Vine and even today is still used when referring to the old Barrhead line.

Busby was also a water stop for the old steam locomotives. The water tower was located between two crossings just west of the hamlet with spouts on both sides so water could be delivered to engines on either track. There was no source of natural water in the area so the railway dug two reservoirs. The large one, following the curve of the Y north of Busby, was the main source and the smaller one, between the legs of the Y, was the backup supply. Mr. Ed Reeve was the Pumpman for many years and after he retired Mr. Bill Jardine assumed those duties. With the advent of the diesel engine this service was no longer required and the water tower and pump hose were removed.

After the railroad siding was installed in

Alcomdale, a substantial loading platform and stockyard were built and the local farmers shipped their cattle by train. Ross Pettibone arranged for the shipment and the ordering of stock cars. There was also a log pond where the logs were dumped next to the train in Alcomdale and trainloads of logs were a common sight passing through. Later, in the early 1930s, another notable sight was the number of unemployed men riding the rails on northbound trains.

From its beginning until the Second World War, the twice weekly passenger train provided the only outside diversion for the community. The young kids would meet every train that stopped at the station and there were always a number of people who would congregate on the station platform to watch the train come in. There was a certain thrill to standing 10 or 15 feet from the train watching that big black engine come bearing down on you. You knew it wouldn't get you, but you tended to step back just the same.

When the train stopped there as such a flurry of activity it was hard to keep track of it all. Toward the front of the train mail was tossed off by the railway postal crew and mail for points north was put on the train. Further back the express car was unloaded including a quantity of cream cans being returned from the dairies and sometimes a box of bread. If any passengers were detaining their baggage would be removed from the baggage car. As the train pulled away you checked out the passengers still on the train, wondering how far they were going. When the sleeper car came by you didn't wonder about them, they were going all the way to the Peace River country.

This sleeping car ticket on the ED&BC dates from the period when J.D. McArthur was president of the railway, 1911 to 1920. The central text reads: "Good in Car on this date, and train only, for accomodation (sic) indicated by punch marks when presented with first-class railway passage ticket or pass.

Passengers will please observe that the privilege paid for is correctly indicated by punch marks on

EDMONTON, DUNVEGAN & BRITISH COLUMBIA RAILWAY											
SLEEPING CAR TICKET											
Passenger's Portion											
Good in Car on this date, and train only, for accomodation indicated by punch marks when presented with first-class railway passage ticket or pass.											
Passengers will please observe that the privilege paid for is correctly indicated by punch marks on this ticket. Wearing apparel or baggage placed in this car will be subject to owner's risk.											
This ticket is valid if any alterations or changes are made J. D. McARTHUR President.											
or if more than one starting point or destination is punched.											
DATE											
JAN. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12											
FEB. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12											
MAR. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12											
APR. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12											
MAY 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12											
JUNE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12											
JULY 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12											
AUG. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12											
SEPT. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12											
OCT. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12											
NOV. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12											
DEC. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12											

ED&BC Railway Sleeping Car Ticket

Edmonton, Dunvegan and British Columbia Rly.		
DINING CAR SERVICE		
Menu		
BREAKFAST		
BAKED APPLE (With Cream), 25c		
ORANGE JUICE (1), 20c; ORANGE, Whole (1), 15c; Sliced (1), 20c		
GRAPE FRUIT (Half), 30c (See also Special \$11p)		
PRESERVED CALIFORNIA PEACHES, 25c	STEWED PRUNES (With Cream), 30c	
BREAKFAST CEREALS (With Cream), 20c		
SMOKED FISH, 45c	FRESH FISH (Fried or Boiled), 45c (See Special \$11p)	
BAKED BEANS (Hot or Cold), 25c		
BROILED MEATS		
SHOULDER STEAK, 15c	SMALL SHOULDER STEAK, 20c	
LAMB CHOPS (1), 45c; (2) 80c		
SUGAR CURED HAM, Broiled or Fried (1 Cut), 65c	BACON (2 Strips), 25c; (3 Strips), 35c	
HAM OR BACON, WITH TWO FRIED EGGS, 65c		
FRIED CALF'S LIVER, WITH BACON, 45c	SMALL COUNTRY SAUSAGES (4), 15c	
GRILLED PORK CHOPS, FRIED APPLES (1), 40c; (2), 75c		
EGGS, OMELETTES, Etc.		
BOILED OR FRIED EGGS (1), 20c; (2), 40c; SCRAMBLED (2), 35c		
SHIRRED (2) 40c		
POACHED ON TOAST, 40c		
OMELETTES (Plain), 45c; JELLY PARLEY, 40c; CHEESE OR TOMATO, 50c		
POTATOES		
HASHED BROWN, 25c (10 Minutes)	FRENCH FRIED, 25c (10 Minutes)	COTTAGE FRIED, 30c (10 Minutes)
WHITE, GRAHAM OR FRUIT BREAD AND BUTTER (For Person), 15c		
DRY OR BUTTERED TOAST, 15c		HOT ROLLS AND BUTTER, 15c
PRESERVED FRUITS, 25c		
JAM OR MARMALADE, 25c	BLACK OR RED CURRANT JELLY, 25c	
GRIDDLE CAKES WITH MAPLE SYRUP, 30c		
TEA OR COFFEE (For Pot), 30c		
COCOA (Per Pot), 25c		MILK, 15c
No Order Served For Less Than 25c to Each Person		

This menu was used on the ED&BC Railway during the summer of 1917

this ticket. Wearing apparel or baggage placed in this car will be entirely at owner's risk. This ticket is void if any alterations or changes are made or if more than one starting point or destination is punched." The stations listed on the ticket are: Edmonton, Morinville, Busby, Westlock, Debney, Dapp, Jarvie, Fawcett, Chisholm, Smith, Sawridge, Widewater, Swan River, Enilda, High Prairie, McLennan, Fowler, Smokey River, Belloy, Spirit River, Clairmont, Grand Prairie (sic), Peace River.

Last of all came the dining car, a glimpse at luxury travel. Imagine eating a full course meal on a train!

The Mearns station was small and didn't have a stationmaster, so locals had to flag down the train themselves if they wanted it to stop. There were flags for the daylight and lanterns for the dark that were kept in the station building. That big black hissing steam engine would scare small children into the station, hiding behind the closed door until the locomotive came to a stop and let out that one last blast of steam.

In Alcomdale, when Mr. Lovelock was the first Postmaster, he had to meet the trains to get the incoming mail and send out the outgoing mail.



Alcomdale Railroad Station

Since there was no telecommunications he spent a great deal of time waiting in the station not knowing whether the train would be on time or hours late on its return trip to Edmonton. He recalled one time waiting on into the middle of the night and decided to give up and go home. He had just gotten into bed when he heard the train whistle about two miles up the track. Needless to say that was one time he missed the train but that didn't happen more than twice over all the years.

Following World War II there were great advances in highway and local road construction resulting in reasonable bus or truck service to all communities. The postal service began trucking the mail to the local post offices and it wasn't long before the railways were using trucks to transport the express. Passenger service, express and mail service which had for so long been in the domain of the railways, was now being taken care of by other forms of transportation. Passenger train service was reduced from a daily train, inaugurated during the war, to twice weekly and eventually to a rail liner (a self propelled coach). This too had to be withdrawn due to lack of use by the public.

Today the rails are used only for the transportation of carload lots such as grain, lumber and vehicles. The passing of the railway service and the local station agent is missed by old timers who recall when their community relied heavily on the train and the service it provided.

Local Train Derailments



On May 29, 1947 a train derailed in Albert Wulff's back yard, SE 14-56-26-W4, at the tracks. This series of photos was taken by Albert and Blanch Wulff and contributed by their son, Ernie.

The following photos and information were taken from The Alberta Railway Museum website, www.railwaymuseum.ab.ca

Locomotive 73 of ED&BC

Locomotive 73 was one of only three built for the Alberta Government Railways by the Canadian Locomotive Co. Built in October 1927, it stood 14ft



Locomotive 73 of ED&BC Railway

7in high, was 67 feet long and 10ft 8in wide. The cylinders were 22in in diameter and the drive wheel was 56in across. It was assigned to the ED&BC and taken on the roster of the Northern Alberta Railways (NAR) after its formation in 1929. This 162.75 ton (325,500) pound engine and tender operated in freight and passenger service on the NAR until retirement in 1960. Sold to Premier Steel, a subsidiary of Stelco in 1960, engine 73 was rescued from the scrapper's torch in 1964. With parts from sister engines 72 and 74, engine 73 was again under steam by 1967. In 1979 the boiler developed a leak and the engine has been in storage ever since. Of the 17 steam locomotives that were owned by the NAR, Locomotive 73 is the only survivor.

Locomotive 1392, a mixed train in the Edmonton area

Built by Locomotive Works of Montreal, Quebec in 1913, this ten wheeler locomotive was 63ft 6in long, 14ft 10in high and 10ft 8in wide. Engines of this class were originally used for passenger service and were among the first to operate in Edmonton on the Canadian Northern Railway. With a drive wheel diameter of 63in and an engine and tender weight of 150 tons, they were the workhorse locomotives that

helped to open up the Prairies. Superseded by heavier and faster locomotives on mainline service, 1392 was one of a group of locomotives that continued performing mixed and way freight duties for the CNR until the general retirement of all steam locomotives in the late 1950s.

As a branchline locomotive, 1392 was used in freight, mixed freight and passenger duties across the Canadian Northern and Canadian National Central and Western systems. In later years 1392 served on work trains and weed trains in Alberta. Retired in 1955, it was put on static display at the Edmonton Exhibition grounds. Acquired by the Museum in 1970, Locomotive 1392 is one of the few operating steam locomotives in Canada, and has a busy life in retirement.

Between the locomotive and the caboose were: box cars weighing 40,700 pounds, used mainly to haul grain; stock cars used to move livestock and carry company material to outlying points from the railway stores or shops; flat cars that were cheap and easy to build, carried anything that could be spiked, nailed or chained down and could be placed one behind the other to carry extra long loads; and steel tank cars that carried 6,191 imperial gallons of water to keep the steam engine running, plus supply water to employees and their families along the line.

Keeping the cars and hoses from freezing in winter was a challenge. One solution was a pail of "dope": wool waste saturated with car oil and used for packing journal boxes. The "dope" was placed at a frozen area and set alight. Imagine the sight of a water car, tender pipe and locomotive feed pipe all ablaze with "dope" pails as crews fought to thaw out equipment.

Caboose 13000 of ED&BC, top window

Built in 1929 in the CNR Transcona Car Shops, this is a typical CNR caboose complete with beds, coal bin, sink, water tank, desks, stove, oven, ice-block refrigerator and cupola seats with backs that



Locomotive 1392 with passenger and baggage cars



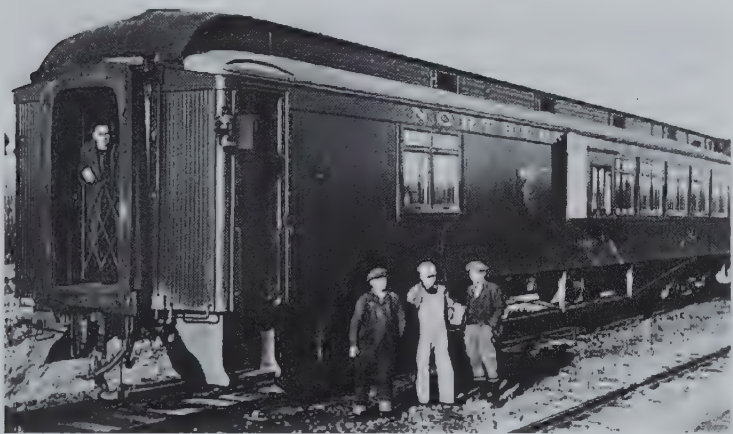
Caboose with top cupola

flip to face the direction in which the train is running. Caboose 78185 was restored to its original condition in the winter of 1987-88. It was used in the filming of “Monte Walsh” starring Tom Selleck and was repainted for the movie, then re-painted and re-stenciled.

About the Caboose

Besides the top window style caboose described above, there was also the side window caboose and the coach caboose or ‘comboose’. The caboose was the conductor’s home and office. The conductor was responsible for the entire train, except the locomotive. Both conductor and engineer worked together to keep the train on schedule. The conductor had to know exactly who and what was on his train, how many, the origin and destination of each item or passenger and all other information that was available.

The conductor was assisted by one or two brakemen (or trainmen as they are known on passenger trains). Brakemen threw switches, coupled and uncoupled cars, checked brakes and made sure the train ran safely. The head end brakeman rode in the locomotive and the tail end brakeman or “brakie” rode in the caboose with the conductor. In the days before the installation of air brakes, brakemen had to climb on the roof of the train to manually set and release the brakes.



Comboose, a coach-caboose used in the late 1930s

The conductor and the brakeman rode in the cupola or the bay windows, whichever the particular caboose had. They looked down the length of the train to see or smell “hot boxes”: overheated axle bearings that could catch fire or seize up and cause a derailment. They also looked for dragging equipment, shifted loads, fires, loose straps or hoboos. If anything out of the ordinary was detected the conductor would signal a stop with his lantern or pulled the emergency brake. The problem was fixed by the train crew or the car was set out on a siding to be repaired later.

As the train travelled the station agents along the line received new orders for the train by telegraph. The train order board was displayed to the approaching train, telling the train crew to pick up orders. Train orders were copied and put in a metal bracket on a wooden hoop. These orders were passed to the locomotive crew and caboose crew using this hoop. The orders were read and reread and then carried out by the crew since each end of the train received the same orders.

During the early days of railroading, conductors and brakemen saw the caboose as their home away from home and each crew would often bring personal belongings from home. Conductors made their own symbol to put on the roof of their caboose to help them find their “home” in a crowded rail yard. At the end of a day’s work the caboose was taken off the train and set out on a siding. The crew would eat and sleep in it overnight and be put on another train the next day.

Each caboose came with three benches with mattresses stored underneath, a coal bin, a stove for heating and cooking, a sink, water for drinking and washing, a conductor’s desk, and an ice block refrigerator. The caboose also had a first-aid kit, stretcher, switchman’s hand lanterns and a flag/flare kit. Newer cabooses had no beds but did have an electric refrigerator, heaters, an oven, a toilet, lockers, an eating table and a conductor’s deck.

Eventually, the caboose was phased out. In February 1988 the Canadian Transport Commission gave permission to Canadian railways to replace the caboose with the new end-of-train unit. The conductor moved into the locomotive cab with the engineman and front-end brakeman. By the fall of 1988 CNR and CPR began the removal of the caboose from active duty. Trains are now operated by a conductor and locomotive engineer, both located in the cab of the locomotive.

Town Histories

Mearns and Alcomdale Area Timeline

1799	Klondike Trail thru our area was used from Fort Edmonton to Lesser Slave Lake by David Thompson.
1879	Trail to Athabasca Landing widened to accommodate carts.
1882	5th Meridian surveyed, cut line marked with pits, mounds and iron posts.
1892	Mearns village established.
1899	Settlers arriving in large numbers (earliest is 1893 on our map).

1900s	(early) Grand Brule, "The Great Fire" covered area from St. Albert to Fort Assiniboine.
1907	Edmonton, Dunvegan and British Columbia Railway incorporated.
1911/1912	Railroad tracks were laid thru Mearns, Alcomdale and Busby areas.
1914	First train to come thru the area.
1918	Alcomdale village established.
1927/1928	Telephone service brought to area.
1930s	The "Red Star Orchestra" going strong with band members Olive Little, Dewey Spargo, Bert Spargo and Arnold Wiedrick.
1930s	The only gravel road in the area was Highway #2.
1936	Morinville Mutual Telephone Co. served our area with 'party lines'.
1950	First general meeting of the Mearns Rural Electric Company.
1953	Power turned on!
1953	July had a record rainfall of 4½ inches of rain in a 24-hour period.
1962	Tornado goes thru the area.
1966	Alberta Government Telephones changed service to 'four party line'!
1967	Natural gas comes to our areas.
1970	Late October, severe 'blizzard' with about 2 feet of snow. Power off 53 hours.
1972	Hutterites move into the area and establish Morinville Hutterite Colony.
1982	Mearns Rural Electric Association transferred to TransAlta Utilities.
1985/1992	Private phone lines for all!
1987	Tornado goes thru East Edmonton on July 31st.
2004	At Oliver Brenneis' 70th birthday party (July) the idea for this history book was discussed by Claire Stitsen and Marion Friedrich.
2004	October: Maureen Slecza, Claire Stitsen and Marion Friedrich meet to plan the publishing of this history book.
2004/2007	Three years of lots of hard work on this book.
2008	This book is HISTORY!

Alcomdale Town History

(much of the historical information used in this section came from "Decades of the Independence District" history book)

Alcomdale is described as a Hamlet on secondary

highway 794, approximately 48 kilometres north northwest of Edmonton.

Around 1965 Toronto lawyer, Warner Alcombrack, brought his wife and family to visit Alcomdale, a tiny Alberta hamlet where they knew not a soul, but half a century earlier Warner's father, Dr. Arthur Wellesley Alcombrack (1882-1962), an Edmonton dentist, had founded Alcomdale and named it for himself. The last syllable was changed to "dale", the English suffix meaning "valley."

Born in Napanee, Ontario, Arthur Alcombrack studied dentistry at Loyola University in Chicago before moving to Edmonton. In about 1918 he bought several quarters of land north of the city in the area about five miles east of Independence. One of these quarters, the SW 5-57-26-W4, became the location for Alcomdale. The railroad cut diagonally through the SW of 5, leaving about sixty acres in the SW corner. There was a siding located down the track near where Mearns is today. He persuaded the Edmonton, Dunvegan and British Columbia Railway, built by J. D. McArthur in 1914 to haul logs from the north to his sawmill in Edmonton, to put a spur line on this piece of land and survey it into lots and streets. The company agreed to lay the steel if the local residents would lay the grade. Some of the donors of labor were George Moore, as foreman, Morris Byer and the Spargo brothers. Mr. Lovelock gave the railroad company the "right of way" over his property at Busby so that Busby could have a station. This was in exchange for a spur line leading to the elevators at Alcomdale. Arthur built a family home just north of the railroad tracks, farmed in his spare time and drove through Alcomdale's streets in his Willys-Knight automobile.

Thomas Lovelock was the first storekeeper and postmaster at Seymour, six miles west of Alcomdale. He moved to Alcomdale in 1919.

In the fall of 1919 Ross Pettibone went into partnership with Thomas Lovelock to build and operate a grocery store and post office in the new hamlet of Alcomdale. It was a two-story building with groceries and post office on the main floor and rooms for the two families upstairs. About 1922 Ross Pettibone left the store business and started the Massey Harris Machinery agency. The family moved into the old Porter Heath house. Displaying the virtues of an early entrepreneur, Ross Pettibone also became an agent for the Imperial Oil Company. Fuel was brought in by tank car and two upright tanks were placed by the railroad tracks. Fuel was transferred via a hose with the help of a small engine or hand pump. Oil and other fuel supplies shipped by train were kept in a large warehouse next to the tanks. Livestock, sold by area farmers, was shipped

by train. Ross Pettibone booked cattle and ordered shipment cars for the stockyards that were also built near the tracks. He himself kept a small herd of cattle in Alcomdale. In 1928 Ross bought a Ford truck and later a Willys-Knight truck to make his custom trucking operation easier. Often during the summers, the truck was loaded with neighbors and friends: the Harringtons, Baileys, Ducharmes, Mills, Mitchells and Fultons, to travel to Alberta Beach for a day of swimming, boating and picnicking. The Pettibones attended the Independence church and Sunday school but there were times when the minister, Rev. Kelly, held church services in their home with Ada Pettibone playing the organ. Rev. Kelly held services in Independence, Seymour and Sion. Later Rev. Kelly held services in Alcomdale School until Mr. Lovelock sold his store in Alcomdale and donated a piece of land for an Anglican Church.

Ross and Ada Pettibone were charter members of the Alcomdale Community League. Ross gradually retired from the business world. In 1937 a new son-in-law, Alan Mills, took over the Massey Harris Machinery Agency. During the early part of the war the Railroad installed a telephone and telegraph line through to Dawson Creek. Ross and Ada worked as cooks for the crews that were improving the railroad beds.

The Union Bank put up a small metal building on the NE corner of Union Avenue and Main Street. The community league later purchased this land for a sports ground. On the opposite corner of Main Street was Mr. Lovelock and Mr. Pettibones' two story building general store and post office.

Across the avenue from the bank, Mr. Wm. Hepburn built a poolroom and dance hall. Opposite the post office, Mr. John Aslin built a general store and had the Allis Chalmers machinery agency.

In 1938 Willis Collins operated a blacksmith shop, garage and filling station in Alcomdale. He also was a lineman for the Mutual Telephone Co.

Porter Heath had a lumberyard and his wife was a schoolteacher.

The first grain elevator was Gillespie Grain, later selling to the Canadian Wheat Pool, built by the Voss Brothers in 1919. Mr. Wm. Jorgenson was the second grain buyer between the years of 1922-23 and later followed by Albert O'Brien. Sometime after, the Voss Brothers built another elevator for the Federal Grain Co. In 1943 United Grain Growers purchased both of these elevators.

George Moore moved his house into town from two miles north and it became Moore's Hotel.

Tom Spargo moved a house into the town and started a trucking business. He later opened a butcher shop.

Alcomdale prospered well for a few years but then came the depression. Several fires occurred, as well. Mr. Aslin's store burned down and was rebuilt but, after a short time, he moved to his farm south of Alcomdale. Mr. Hepburn's hall burned one evening just as the people were gathering for the dance. About this time Wilfred Cyre, who had bought out Jack Lorer, lost his garage to a fire and the Union Bank closed down.

Alcomdale failed to develop as a major center, so in the early 1920s the Alcombrack family moved to Toronto where Arthur practiced dentistry for the rest of his long life. There he made a shrewder investment: he owned property at the corner of Bloor and Yonge streets where the Hudson's Bay Company store was later built. Dr. Alcombrack is buried in Toronto's Mount Pleasant Cemetery. The framed survey plans of Alcomdale hang in his grandson's Toronto home.

Despite the set backs, Alcomdale continued to survive as a small town. The Alcomdale Community League was formed around 1930. Mr. Hepburn had donated two lots to the League and on this, a new hall was built. It was all volunteer labor under the foremanship of Mr. Fortier of Pickardville. The records of the League's early years have been lost but Mr. Walter Purchess was its first president and Mr. Paul Spargo the secretary. Since the start, the Alcomdale Community League has thrived, having their good and bad times like any organization, but always remaining an integral part of the Town of Alcomdale.



Alcomdale Hall

In the 40s and 50s, Alcomdale was quite the place. It had its large two-room school, the Massey Harris dealership and the garage operated by Mr. Allan Mills. It also had the Cockshutt dealership operated by the Spargo Brothers and in 1950 Paul Lalonde started an auto wreckers and scrap iron business. Two grocery stores were open: one



Former Lovelock-Pettibone/Whitson/Robinson/Lister/Remillard store

operated by H. F. Lipke & Sons (later by Mr. Dvernychuk), the other store was operated by Mr. Whitson. This second store had several owners after Mr. Whitson. They were Mr. Ray Robinson, Mr. Lister and Mr. Maurice Remillard. Like all the little hamlet stores, Alcomdale stores eventually shut down.

Alcomdale Town Report in 1920

"A PD & farming settlement on SW 5-57-26-W4th in St. Albert Provincial Electoral Division on the Edmonton/Dunvegan & British Columbia Railway 31 miles NW of Edmonton and 11 miles NW of Morinville. Has Alberta Government telephone, public school, bank, C.C. express and Dominion Government telegraph office. Good mixed farming district, underlain with coal, the country being fairly well settled. A good proportion of land can be purchased at an average of \$30 per acre. Population 50.

Alberta Government Telephones long distance service

Aslin J.B. general store and farm implements

Constantine A., garage

Frontier Lumber Co. Ltd., P.G. Heath, mgr

Gillespie Elevator Co. Ltd., J.D.F Morin, mgr.

Imperial Oil Limited, R. Pettibone

Lovelock, T.F., postmaster

Union Bank, Jas R. Rowley, mgr."

Alcomdale Business Licenses

(Information taken from the Provincial Archives)

- Alcomdale Pool Hall – Raymond Victor Robinson, Aug. 1962, 3 tables 4x12, 4x10, 4x8. Not opened in 1968 "on account of poor crops, no money to spend, the pool hall has not been opened this year as yet."
- A.H. Libke General Store, H.F. Libke, November 21, 1957.
- Geo. D. Spargo – made application for a Liquefied

Petroleum Gas License on October 24, 1958. He would sell propane at NW 32-57-26-W4 that he purchased from Canadian Propane Ltd. and stored in a 1,000 gallon tank.

Alcomdale that was in 1957

By Olga Bilecki

Fifty years ago to the year, I had the good fortune to spend a teaching year in Alcomdale. On a hot Saturday in late July the superintendent of Sturgeon School Division, Frank Swan, drove three of us prospective teachers, Virginia Zaharichuk, Marcella Rawluk and me to take a look at the school set up in Alcomdale. It surprised me to see a stretched out town, unlike the compact house upon house towns I was used to. Not a single soul was in sight.

The school, located on a large schoolyard on the west side of town, was a large symmetrical two roomed frame building facing the road, with a third room attached to it behind on the west. A new spacious office with its own entry was attached to the front of the west section, and interconnected to a common hallway. Inside there were large bright rooms, electric lights, a telephone and a large water dispenser (disposable paper cups) in the main hall. The full basement contained separated sections for boys and girls, chemical toilets and wash facilities, and a stoker furnace. A drilled well sat to the northeast of the school. Two teacherages were situated about three city blocks straight east, before the corner of main. The larger, designated for the principal, was a recently built white frame house on a full basement with a furnace and a coal room. A kitchen with pantry, cupboards, and a woodstove converted to natural gas, a table and four chairs, a nice sized living room with a picture window, and two bedrooms each with a closet, a bed and mattress, and a dresser. Electricity, a pulley clothesline off the back door entry, a well nearby, a garage and a privy to the south. The other teacherage just a few yards west was older; cabin styled and had two rooms. Some days later I signed to teach.

On the Saturday of Labour Day weekend, I arrived on the Northern Alberta Railway train from Edmonton and walked from the tiny station to the large teacherage. Lights at the school brought me to meet the janitors, Jack and Beryl Bailey, who were readying the school for opening. Early on Tuesday morning, Virginia Zaharichuk (grades 1-3), Marcella Rawluk (grades 4-6) and I, Olga Melnychuk (grades 7-9), were on hand to meet 93 students who came from the areas of Deadman Lake to near Busby, from Kingsley, Bamill, Independence, and Alcomdale



Staff of Alcomdale School 1957-1958 – Mrs. Marcella Rawluk (grades 4-6), Miss Olga Melnychuk (grades 7-9), Miss Virginia Zaharichuk (grades 1-3) at the front door of big teacherage

School Districts on two buses driven by Alex Brenneis and Alan Mills. Only 12 of these students were local.

School opening and an end to the harvest season turned the town into a busy beehive. An active Home and School Association welcomed the teachers at its first meeting in September. The students unions put on a raffle and dance at the end of October to raise funds for the Christmas tree, with the Satellites drawing a good crowd. The big “flu” hit in early October and ravaged into December, making normal practicing for the concert difficult, but the Christmas concert was held in the Alcomdale Hall as usual. The newly opened curling rink was busy. After the holidays, the Home and School parents shaped up the rink to the north of the school and flooded it. The light winter did not promote good ice. On a cool afternoon in February, the Dunstable boys arrived to play Alcomdale and won by a low score in the only hockey game of that winter. Also in February, the Junior High took an education tour to Edmonton (Alex Brenneis’ bus). We visited the Eskimo exhibits at the Rutherford Library at the University of Alberta and we spent an hour and a bit visiting the Alberta Legislature where we were warmly received and introduced to the House in Session by the MLA for our constituency, Arthur Soetaert. We had to return by 3:30 p.m. to catch dismissal at Alcomdale.

Also in the New Year, after much pleading and prompting, the Division supplied our school with a new gestetner to be used in duplication of seatwork and exams in all grades. That was the highlight of

our year. Its cost was about \$350, with the School Division paying half and the home and school paying the rest. A textbook rental plan had just come into effect in which the division bought texts at cost and supplied all texts to a student for the year at a third of the cost, with the student turning in his books at the end of June. The textbooks were to last three years. The division supplied free of charge; art paper, manilla tag, construction paper, newsprint foolscap, powder paints, white and colored chalk, and paper towels for washing hands.

Throughout the school year, there was no slackening of activities, and this is where memories of times and places abound. I did not own a car. People generously picked me up and took me to their homes for suppers and Sunday dinners. We were at John Gonek’s for Ukrainian Christmas Eve and at Warshawski’s for New Years. At a supper invitation at Ward Fulton’s, I had the privilege to hold his Distinguished Flying Cross medal in my hand, and slowly realized I was in the presence of a decorated World War II hero. The community was conscientious about church attendance. I was to the United Church at Independence, the Alcomdale Anglican Church, and the Roman Catholic Church at Busby. The Independence Church supper in November was a big event. I attended a Women’s Institute meeting at Florence Cameron’s, there meeting Orpha Fulton.

I saw Lake Nakamun when it had only one log cabin on the east hill. Victoria Domino took me fishing there on a gray Saturday morning in May. Now that lady knew how to cast and how to handle the reeds!

I saw an unbelievable spread of blooming crocuses, as big as a city lot, somewhere north of Mearns, near the railway track. We were at the St. Charles June picnic at Mearns, a big celebration on a beautiful Sunday.

I delivered my first curling rock to the call of a broom held by Mr. Hamilton. He was a gentleman on ice, and he was to suffer another novice and me on his team for the duration of the curling season.

Catching the NAR at 6:50 on a Saturday morning took some kind of courage, especially when I was alone. You had to flag the train down when it was about 100 yards away. You had to take the flag from the station, get on the middle of the track and wave it three times or so, and then hustle off fast. It always amazed me that the engineer of that long lumbering train from Peace River would come to a stop with the passenger car right in front of me.

In the first weeks after school had started, on at least two occasions, the chairman of the local school

board would find me and ask how things were going. Then he would say, "Do you need anything?" Unbelievable! Now, how many teachers out there could boast of such consideration? Thank you, Mr. Ed Borle.

The 27 students I taught were diligent and committed. The homework load was heavy and I was always surprised to see it done. Grade IX wrote Departmental final examinations at the end of June. A mark representing the students average for the year had to be submitted then, and was to count 50% toward the final diploma mark so there was much testing (quizzes and exams) and marking throughout the year. Three report cards were issued; October, January and April, plus the last one in June to the grades seven and eight. That Easter week I spent marking exams and doing report cards. The very busy month of June came all too soon. Grades seven and eight were dismissed a week early while the grade nine finals were being written. The registers had to be compiled, the textbooks had to be checked and evaluated and sorted in readiness for next September, and reports had to be filed with Central Office in Morinville.

I was not to be returning to Alcomdale in September. A new position for High School Home Economic and Vice Principal was bringing me back to Bon Accord, where I had taught from 1953 to 1956. I caught the NAR back to Edmonton to begin Summer School on July 3rd.

I taught Home Economics at Horse Hill, Namao and Bon Accord until 1961, when Sturgeon Division took Shop and Home Economics off its program. I married Peter Bilecki of the Willow Springs District, north of Bon Accord in 1961. I left teaching in 1964 to mind our family of three; Gary, Steven and Lori, and to become the ever aspiring and never expiring farm wife.

Alcomdale proper in 1956 consisted of probably 16 or so residences; Libke's and their General Store west of the highway just west of the school, the Hamilton's east of the school, the Thompson's north of there, Mrs. Fedunke northwest, the Lalonde's east of Main just north of the teacherages, the Jack Bailey's and Mr. Gray and Dan Brenneis' near the elevator, the Dick Whitson's and their General Store plus a Post Office south on Main. To the east of



Olga Melnychuk, circa 1957

them were the two homes of Ducarme's and Cyre's, and further east lived the Alan Mills' (Mills Motors). To the west of the Whitson Store was the new home of the Dewey Spargo's, and somewhere in there was the little house of Mrs. White. There were two teacherages, one elevator, an Anglican Church, Alcomdale Hall, the Curling Rink, and Fertilizer Sales (Spargo Bros.). The town was well lit at night.

I cherish my memories of Alcomdale, its down to earth and unassuming people who accepted me as one of their own. For a short time I was a part of its extended community, and for that I was and am grateful. And . . . if I ever have the chance to teach in the "hereafter", I shall aim to find a place with a school and students and a supporting community like the Alcomdale that was in 1957.

Alcomdale Farmers Maple Leaf Band

In the summer of 1929 Mr. William Spencer approached Mr. Bert Spargo and suggested starting a brass band. If he got some boys together, would Mr. Spargo lead it? So the first Saturday night, seven boys came out to organize a band. They were William Spencer, his son Arlo, Arnold Wiedrick, Alex McMillan, Bill, and Henry and Ward Munro. These boys were from the north and east of Busby.

Instruments were bought from a former bandleader in Edmonton, a Mr. Sloane, and some from Robinsons Music Store. The slide trombone came from Tip the Tailor.

The first meeting was held in a bunkhouse on the Spargo farm. As the membership grew, more room was needed. The members called a bee and built a log cabin for their meeting and practices. At first the band was called the Busby Brass Band, but as more members came from Alcomdale and Independence districts, the name was changed to the Farmers Maple Leaf Band.

Bert Spargo recalls the many weeks of practice until midnight and the weary hours practicing scales and expressions, he with a baton in his hand, a horn in his ear and often a headache. At last he decided they should play together. The harmonious result was good, very good, and they were ready for the world.

The band held several dances. When the new hall was built, it was used for band dances and also for card parties. The first dance the band put on to raise money was a financial disaster. It was held in the Busby Hall and they went \$20.00 in the hole. Mr. Emerson Wiedrick bailed them out and each member gave \$2.65 to repay him. That was quite a sum of money in those days. However, they had learned what not to do and later dances were most successful.

Band concerts were held in the local halls,

followed by a dance. The annual masquerade dance was not soon forgotten.

The band boys played for several years at the annual Busby Fair. The first year they were paid \$15.00, but later years they were paid \$25.00 for the afternoon. Once they played at a picnic at Island Lake, east of Clyde.

After the first instruments were bought, most of the members supplied their own except the big horns and baritones. There were many faithful band members who were always there for band practice once a week, but no one was as faithful and patient as Bert Spargo. Everyone had great admiration for their leader. The band was a big undertaking for Bert when one considers that almost no one knew too much about music and he succeeded in making a reasonably good band out of a bunch of farm boys. All he ever got was a few headaches and the satisfaction. It was a great experience for all the members, even just to get to know boys from other districts, as in those days acquaintances were limited to fairly close to home. The districts became more than just names and through the band good friends and some lasting friendships were made.

There were other members that joined for a short while but were not able to continue. Bert Spargo considered 21 a full band. When Bert decided not to lead the band anymore he gave them the use of the band hall for as long as they wished to carry on. However, it did not last too long without him and soon disbanded.

According to the minutes of the Independence Women's Institute, a band continued in Independence for two years anyway with A. Morin as leader. They used Independence Hall for practice. After the war, the band reorganized and continued for a short while using the Independence Hall for practices.

Members of the Farmers Maple Leaf Band were: Laurie Davidson, Tom McMillan, George Munro, William Munro, Arlo Spencer, Don Whitson, Art Morin, Bert Spargo, Ward Munro, Arnold Wiedrick, Henry Munro, Britton Mills, Alex McMillan, Bert Mitchell, Alan Mills, Dick Whitson, William Spencer, Stan Munro, Ward and Cameron Fulton, Lloyd Keene and Britton Mills.

Alcomdale Public Library

In the fall of 1958 the Women's Institute discussed the need of a library to serve the area. Credit is given to Mr. and Mrs. Norman Bakker for the promotion of the same. Mr. J. Wiltshire, of the Cultural Activities Branch, addressed a group of interested persons in an Alcomdale schoolroom one evening in November. A council was formed made up of delegates representing supporting organizations. Those on the board were

Mrs. N. Bakker, Mrs. L. Whitson, Mrs. A. Cameron, Mrs. Ward Fulton, Mrs. E. Smith, Miss Grace Cox, Mrs. M. Hamilton and Mr. A. Mills. These names represented Independence Women's Institute, Independence Church Women, the Alcomdale Home and School Association, the Students Union, the Anglican Church Women's Association and the Alcomdale Community League. An application was made to the Department of Economic Affairs for designation as a Community Library. This was received in March of 1959. "Therefore upon the recommendation of the Alberta Library Board" the new library became the Alcomdale Public Library, providing library facilities to the public. It was housed in a small room in the Alcomdale School and was open to the pupils on Friday afternoon and to the public after school hours.

Money was needed to buy books and necessities. The Women's Institute had given a donation and each supporting branch was assessed ten dollars yearly. "Platter Parties" were held in the Independence Hall, bake sales, selling lunches at an occasional farm sale and a few times at hockey games played on the Alcomdale ice. Then there was the job of mending books for the Sturgeon School Division at 0.50¢ per book. There was a government grant each year regulated by the number of books that had been bought the year before. The librarians were volunteers.

In 1961 a teacherage in Alcomdale became vacant so the Library Board purchased it for \$75.00 and had it moved by volunteer labor, locating it on a piece of ground given by Mr. M. Hamilton to the Library Board, on the edge of his property.

The library remained in this building until a year after the school was closed. The county co-operated by allowing the school buses coming home via Alcomdale on Fridays, to stop and allow the children to choose books from the library.

In 1969 the building and lot was sold to Mark Kinsella. The Camilla School chose what books they would like in their library and the remainder was placed on shelves in a room in the Alcomdale Curling Rink.

Excerpts from newspaper articles on Alcomdale (1986) *A Writer of Simpler Times* – By Tracy Wright

Alcomdale – Beryl Bailey feels sorry for kids today... "I'm thankful I grew up when I did," said the 87-year-old self-styled writer and daughter of the Depression. Society's standards are deteriorating all too rapidly, she said.

"Standards have gone out the window. It's time we brought them back in." Beryl is aware her set of

rules isn't everybody's. But she comes by them honestly. After all, her first birthday preceded the end of Queen Victoria's reign.

Born in Williamson, N.Y. in October 1899, Beryl moved with her family to Ontario a few years later and during a visit to Alberta met her future husband, a Saskatchewan farmer. Together they took up a part-time farming career on the Alexander Reserve near Morinville.

They moved to Lesser Slave Lake in the early 1940's, and Beryl took a job with the Prices Control Board, a federal agency set up to ensure store owners kept prices at set levels during the economic depression. The job meant traveling more than 100 miles on horseback to visit local stores scattered across the countryside whenever another trainload of supplies arrived. It was a feat that didn't go unnoticed by a local radio writer who aired her story on CFRN in Edmonton. It wasn't her first exposure to the writing field. Beryl began free-lancing for Fur, Fish and Game doing an article on mink ranching. She wrote for The Western Producer and others until 1955 when she went to work for Sun Publishing, a weekly paper in Edmonton for which she did the births, deaths, weddings and anniversaries. Beryl worked there until 1968 when the paper went into receivership.

She is a voracious reader who reads five newspapers daily, and four weekly magazines. It was perhaps this love of the written word that eventually evolved into a part-time writing career. She writes between 300 to 400 letters to various friends and organizations per year, and since 1951 has read nearly 1,500 books. No one particular person influenced her writing but she was encouraged by a fellow writer who submitted her name to join an American Writers Club and later urged her to enter a club-writing contest. Beryl won first prize. She had her first article published during the 1940s while living in Lesser Slave Lake. It was on mink ranching and sold for \$25.

Nowadays Beryl is writing for *The Sturgeon Gazette* doing the personals for Alcomdale and surrounding areas. She also works with organizations like the SPCA; the Animal Defense League, a group interested in the preservation of endangered animals; and the National Citizens Coalition.

Articles of Interest

Written by Beryl Bailey – Alcomdale

1931 – Mr. Herman F. Libke opened a store in Alcomdale and operated it for 28 years.

1950s – Alan Mills, Massey-Harris-Ferguson

local dealer at Alcomdale, has announced that he received notice from the headquarters that shareholders had sanctioned a by-law changing the name of the company to Massey-Ferguson.

1961 – Alcomdale Public Library Moves to New Building

Alcomdale – The Alcomdale Public Library is happy to announce their removal from the school to their new home, the building they purchased last fall. The big day was May 25; the building has been equipped with shelves and redecorated.

New books have been arriving weekly and are being placed on shelves as soon as they arrive. Over 50 new books have been received so far. They are for both children and adults, and include such titles as; "Not To-Morrow Now", a timely book on Africa written by the author of the Observer; "Beyond the Old Bone Trail" a story of Saskatchewan in pioneer times, "Perennial Borders and Rock Gardens" for garden enthusiasts. Titles for children include, "Anne of Avonlea", "Rocks and Minerals", "I Want To Be a Train Engineer", "Prairie Colt", "Adventure Among Birds", "White Panther" and many others.

During the Easter holidays, members repaired 117 more books for the Sturgeon division. This work will continue during the summer and anyone wishing to help may contact any of the library members.

1958 – \$4,500 Curling Rink at Alcomdale Opened Jan. 8

The official opening of the new Alcomdale curling rink took place Wednesday evening, Jan. 8 at 8 o'clock. The weather was ideal and resulted in a large attendance being present. Ward Fulton was master of ceremonies, and in his opening remarks he stressed the difficulties and handicaps the community had to contend with before the curling rink took shape and reached its present state of completion.

Will Arlow was given credit for creating interest in the grand old game of curling and it was largely due to his efforts that others became interested enough to form a group and make a start on building a curling rink for the district.

About three years ago a start was made on the project. There being no money even for lumber, a timber berth was secured and a logging bee held. Logs were sawn at a mill loaned to the group and the Community League paid the stumpage fee of \$180 which helped immensely. The lumber was hauled to the site of the rink and dry-piled by those owning trucks, where planing was done the following year.

The Community League gave the curling club the use of their hall in which to hold dances and other social affairs to help them raise money for

their rink. The next year the cement was poured for foundation and cistern. Last summer before spring work started on the land, the business of putting up the framework, etc. was undertaken. From then until December, large groups of volunteer workers, as many as 30 at times, have been working to get the rink ready for use this season.

An opening bonspiel was held a short time ago with an invitation to everyone in the district to attend. Wednesday night's official opening gave all those who helped in any way to build the rink, a great sense of satisfaction.

A. Soetaert, MLA, mayor of Morinville, and Don Clayton, farm sports director of CPCA Edmonton, were the guests of honor. Mr. Soetaert spoke briefly commending the group for their achievement in building the rink. He said he felt a personal interest in the district, as he and his wife started their married life a few miles from the new curling rink and the date of the opening held special interest for him, as it was his 23rd wedding anniversary. He threw the first rock and cut the ribbon right on the button. Bill Grey, 73, and the largest cash contributor to the rink fund, held the broom. Don Clayton interviewed Ward Fulton and carried the talk on his noon broadcast the following day.

M.M. Hamilton and Arthur Gill were chosen to skip the first game of the opening night. Mr. Hamilton, aged 74, was given a special mention by the MC for the long hours and many weeks of labor he had donated toward the building of the curling rink. Mr. Hamilton is also the secretary of the club and can hold his own on the ice, too. His wife was given a big hand for being on hand daily all through the building grind with coffee for the crew. Lunch was supplied by the women of the district to which Mrs. Hamilton gave her share. Dan Brenneis was the first president, with the present one, Dick Whitson succeeding him. Both have given of their time and work without stint.

Alan Mills presented the prize for the opening bonspiel to the following – Grand Challenge – skip, Dan Brenneis, curling trophies; second, Don Rinas, skip, water glasses. Second event: A. Friedrich, skip – curling trophies; second, A. Gill, skip, water tumblers. Third event: Joe Hermanutz, skip, curling trophies; 2nd, Alan Mills, skip, water glasses. The curling club supplied the trophies for the bonspiel. Coffee and doughnuts, with oranges, were served to all by the curling club at the close of the official opening ceremony. To date the curling rink has cost \$4,500 of which only \$900 remains to be paid. With curling rinks surrounding Alcomdale within a radius of from three, six and ten miles, it speaks well for

the residents of the community who supplied the support and the cash for their rink.

Oct. 25, year unknown – Air Cadets Win Art Smith Trophy

Alcomdale – Harold Anderson was the civilian delegate who represented the Alcomdale members of the Bon Accord Air Cadet League of Canada held Oct. 25, at the Macdonald Hotel, Edmonton. At a banquet in the evening the Bon Accord Squadron received the Art Smith Trophy citizenship award for the province of Alberta. They also came within four-tenths of a point of winning the provincial drill competition award, which was won by the Whitehorse, Yukon squadron.

1957, June 13 – Ryley – Air Cadets take part in Parade – Sgt. Raymond Mills, Cpl. Evan Cameron, Cpl. Ken Anderson, Billy Byer and Gordon Whitson.

1957, Sept. 22 – St. Stephen's Anglican Church held a dedication service of the new building. Rt. Rev. H. H. Clark, Lord Bishop of Edmonton, carried out the service, assisted by the vicar, the Rev. R.A. Sayer of Westlock and Alcomdale, and the founding vicar, the Rev. Kells A. Minchin. Also present was Mr. R.F. Lovelock, aged 84, an early pioneer of the district and donor of the church site.

1958, March 22 – Ward Fulton, president of the Alcomdale Curling Club. Dan Brenneis, secretary treasurer. They had an open bonspiel with 48 rinks entered.

1958 – Farewell Party for Dick and Martha Whitson. Dick Whitson was a grain buyer at Alcomdale prior to operating the post office, general store and bulk oil agency in Alcomdale.

1958, Dec. 17 – Dan Sheehan Rink wins Grand Challenge.

1961-62 – Ludick Banack Elected Head of Curling Club

Alcomdale – The annual meeting of the Alcomdale Curling Club was held March 10 in the rink. Once again the club reported a successful year. Officers elected were: president, Ludick Banack; vice-president, Peter Girard; secretary-treasurer, Dan Brenneis. A board of seven directors was elected: William Arlow, Alan Mills, Alex Brenneis, James Tomten, Maurice Bugnet, Ward Fulton and Ted Rinus.

During the early part of the month an elderly men's bonspiel was held. First prize went to the Steve Schuller rink of Busby; second to Ernie Houle rink of Morinville; third, Alan Mills rink of Alcomdale; and fourth to Carl Gerig rink of Busby.

To finish the season a local mixed bonspiel was held March 23, 24, 25, inclusive. First event: Emile Ricard rink was first and received trophies; second,

Charles Rautio rink, set of eight glasses. Second event: Sydney Meakin rink was first and received trophies; second, Dan Brenneis rink, set of eight glasses. The man's curling sweater, knitted and donated by Mrs. Myron Davidson, was won by Loretta Davidson.

1962 – Alcomdale – Thousands of dollars of damage was done to the hamlet of Alcomdale when a tornado or cyclone struck the afternoon of July 22. High winds had blown all day from the southwest. About 3:00 p.m., the wind increased in volume and by four o'clock the worst of the storm struck. Trees were toppled, shrubs blown out of the ground by the roots, gardens etc. flattened. Chimneys of houses came down and many articles were blown away. Windows in the community hall and several houses were broken. Spruce trees that had stood for decades in front of Wilfred Cyre's house were torn out by the roots. Small buildings and outhouses were blown over and shingles torn off many roofs.

The worst damage was done to the United Grain Growers' two elevators. Part of the roof and the doors were torn off one elevator and the coalhouse was lifted right off the coal and carried across the road. The second elevator had shingles taken off the roof, and some off the roof of the coalhouse. The wind tore away the whole of the weighing house and ramps leading to and from it. The grain buyer's house had the porch blown away.

Mills' garage and buildings had windows broken, parts of machinery blown away and some chickens killed. The wind moved the false front of the garage away from the main part of the building. Mike's General store had one of the big front windows blown in and Tim Harrington's barn, a mile from the hamlet, was blown to pieces. The Spargo brothers' home was in the path of the storm and it made a shambles of much of their place. An arbor on the lawn was blown away and smashed to bits; also several lawn chairs, a glider couch and canopy under the arbor was blown across the lawn and twisted up; a wagon was damaged; roofs were taken off the granaries and a two story house used as a granary was moved about six feet east. A small trailer was picked up and blown against a caboose, which it toppled over, smashing the trailer and shingles off the roof, which added to the destruction. Small buildings on the farm were toppled and a new carport was ripped off the house and blown away and smashed to pieces. Power and telephone lines were torn down. A heavy rain shower followed but little hail.

1968 – Ed Brenneis Holds Perfect Cribbage Hand

Alcomdale – Ed Brenneis of Alcomdale district

joined the exclusive circle of cribbage players on April 4 when he held the coveted 29-count hand. After playing cribbage for decades he was sitting on cloud nine when he realized he held the much hoped-for-but-not-expected hand of all cribbage players. The occasion was at the social evening given in the Alcomdale community hall by the parish of St. Charles' Church, Mearns, in honor of the parishioners who had spent a week working at the church. During this week of work the group painted the interior of the church peach with touches of blue. They tiled the floor with beige and blue-flecked tiles and put blue carpet in the sanctuary. A big job well done and much appreciated, hence the evening of cards, music, and ending in a bounteous lunch being served.

1968 – A number of local children made their appearance on the popular Popcorn Playhouse program of CFRN. Pamela Brenneis, like a veteran performer, took the stool and sang the little song children find popular, singing the French version and the English, four year old style, "Are you Sleeping Brother John". Pam's older brother Albert, celebrating a sixth birthday, and Alan and Neil Brenneis, two Kluthe boys and a young Borle lad were in the group. Monday July 1st, Myra Brenneis, with sisters Cindy and Tammy, brother Neil, and Betty Warshawski attended Popcorn Playhouse, it being Myra's birthday, she was able to try her luck with the shovel and sand as did Albert, her cousin, on Saturday of last week.

1970 – The Alcomdale Public Library held a meeting recently in the lounge of the curling club to discuss general business and the renovating of the small room in the rink to house the books they had moved from the library building when it was sold. Dan Brenneis agreed to do the job of a new floor, install the shelves, etc. Later members of the board will sort and install books in the room. Residents of the community are invited to borrow books when the renovations are complete.

1970 – Mark Kinsella who bought the old Alcomdale School some time ago and uses it for his bee and honey business has bought the little Alcomdale Public Library. The adult books, which were kept when the plans to sell the building were made, are now housed in the lounge of the curling rink.

1970 – Mrs. Robert Harkin is in England taking a course in Herbal Medicines which she plans on using in conjunction with her physiotherapy practice.

1970 – After 50 years in the central location of the hamlet, Alcomdale post-office has been moved to Michaels General Store outside the hamlet boundaries. It has served three generations of many

families in the district in its old location with several changes of merchants. A petition was circulated with a large number of names of persons who protested the change from the Lister General Store to the new location, seeing no need for the change. It will not only be inconvenient for many, but a distinct hardship for the many senior citizens residing in the hamlet who have no transportation in good weather, and worse, in stormy or bitter cold. The reason given was that veterans from the last war have a preference. A rural route may be had if people wish it.

1970 – The Alcomdale Community held a teen dance, which was financially successful, in their hall October 24 with a large crowd. The following hours saw the weather change drastically and a blizzard hit the district, as it did elsewhere, crippling the area. Those with propane heating or coal were the lucky ones. Those without moved in with neighbours who either had heating not requiring electricity or were able to put up heaters. The power was off from 11:00 a.m. Sunday to Tuesday at 5:00 p.m. A second day of the same type was experienced the beginning of the following week with odd off and on power failures as well as a full day or more.

1971, Jan. 24 – The C.W.L. of St. Charles Church, Mearns, held another of their popular Brunches at noon Sunday, January 24 with a good number availing themselves of the meal after late service. The very cold weather resulted in not quite as large attendance as usual but on the whole, satisfactory.

1972, August 12 – Alcomdale Matters

Father McGrane of St. Charles' Parish took 13 of his altar boys on a camping trip to Lac La Nonne for four full days of camping. The boys in age from 10 to 14 enjoyed themselves immensely, fishing, swimming and boating on the lake in the motorboat built by Father McGrane himself. The boys were from the three parishes. Father McGrane serves Mearns, Riviere Qui Barre and Busby. The group returned home July 27. Father McGrane in past years has worked with boys a great deal and has had other groups on camping trips through the years. Miss Violet Brenneis and Miss Marieta Boddez took on the job of catering to the hearty appetites of the boys who did full justice to the girls' cooking. The following boys went to camp: Gary Van Brabant; Jerry Van Brabant; Walter, Gerard, and David Boddez; Ronny Kieser, David and Gordon Kluthe; Neil, Albert and Greg Brenneis; Jimmy Sheehan; and Jimmy Ricard. Two of the older boys, Greg Brenneis and Walter Boddez were a great help to the girls' choring, which included dishwashing... for which the cooks were most grateful.

1972, Dec. 2 – The new annex of the United Grain Growers was finished in October and is now being used for grain. The annex has a larger capacity for storage of grain than the present elevator.

1977, Oct. 12 – Celebrations over Alcomdale Sewer

A family party for the shareholders and others who helped with the sewer project of the Alcomdale Development Co-op was held Saturday evening, September 24, in the Alcomdale Community Hall. About sixty or so people were present including the children. Supper was served at 7:30 p.m. a delicious one, hot and cold meats and vegetables, salads, pickles, rolls and sweets for the finishing off of a bountiful meal. Mrs. M. Elder of the hamlet, noted for her excellent and very lovely cake decorating, made an oblong cake with, "Congratulations Alcomdale," on it and in the center a bottle of the bubbly as an extra touch. Music was supplied by a large radio of the James Doidges for those wishing to dance. Others visited and a few played cards. Ernie Jamison M.L.A. for the district was present. Mr. Jamison supported and helped where he could with the project. John Lister spoke on behalf of the shareholders thanking Jim Falls for all the planning and work he had done to get this scheme going and bringing it to a satisfactory conclusion.

1980, June 18 – Alcomdale petitions for paving 794

A delegation of residents from the Alcomdale area wants action on the long-promised paving of Highway 794 in their district. Headed by Maurice Remillard, the group met with the MD Sturgeon Council on June 12 to advise council of the action being taken. Mr. Remillard presented a petition signed by over 500 residents which requests the Provincial Government to honour the promises it has made over the past few years. It was explained that due to the highway being paved from the city north to Sandy Lake road, and from Westlock south to the Pickardville corner, the traffic on the unimproved stretch has increased many times over. During the recent two weeks of wet weather the road was a terrible mess, and the delegations pointed out that it is nearly as bad in dry weather when clouds of dust take the place of the mud. The M.D. Sturgeon has forwarded the petition to the government on behalf of the Alcomdale residents.

1980, June 4 – Alcomdale school reunion was a great success

Saturday, May 17, 1980 was a red-letter day for former pupils, teachers, their relatives and friends who gathered at Holland House for the Bamill School Reunion. Friendship hour and check-in started the evening at 6 p.m. Grace was said by

Orpha (Fulton) Benson, followed by a buffet dinner with Jim Kyle as master of ceremonies. Toasts: to Alberta by Florence (Mills) Cameron; to Students, Ross Bacon; Teachers, Norman Macdonald; and to Our Friends, Ward Fulton. Guest speaker, Miss Eva McKittrick, spoke on her teaching days in the area during the early days. She taught in the Independence one-room school where a few of the Bamill pupils attended until Bamill was built.

Music for the evening was by Bob Layton Aggregation, and they played the type of music enjoyed in earlier years, which had melody and rhythm. During intermission at 10:15 p.m. Christina (Cameron) Dorward recited a poem "Remembrance"; Mark and Nelle (Sprakman) West presented Round Dancing; Bert and Margaret Mitchell did Scottish Ballroom Dancing and the Macdonald sisters put on a skit, followed by a school song composed and conducted by Dick Morton. The evening ended with coffee and cake, the cake courtesy of Marjorie (Rye) Roberts, a replica of old Bamill School complete with schoolyard, horses, swings and the two small outbuildings – His and Hers. A circle was formed and Auld Lang Syne sung. Booklets were given to guests containing the history of the school and a list of guests and messages from the teachers who had taught in Bamill from the time it was built; a poem by Robert Frost, "The Road Not Taken"; and Minutes of Bamill School District No. 3762 with a short history.

Attending the reunion were 145 guests, of which 55 were former pupils and five were teachers. They came from all over Alberta, B.C., Saskatchewan, Ontario, Texas and California. The following are pupils and teachers who have through the years passed away but are remembered: Alan Mills, Bob Leahy, Laurie Davidson, Myles Hargrove, Charlie Sim, Don Kyle, Charlie Whitson, Thompson Fulton, Maurice Shaver, May Dunham, Josephine Gray, William F. Hargrove, Madge (Hargrove) Ellett, Olive (McKittrick) McKeever, Hallie (Taylor) Macdonald, Orpha (Hargrove) Fulton, Bessie (Crone) Hargrove, and Mildred (Bacon) Jorgenson.

"They say the moment that you're born, is when you start to die

And the first time that we said "Hello", began our first goodbye..."

1981, March 4 – Alcomdale Development Co-op meeting Feb. 19 in the Alcomdale Hall planning the water system for the Hamlet in the coming spring & summer. Hope it can be started and completed by fall.

1982, Nov. 10 – Alcomdale toasts new water system

The people of Alcomdale celebrated the

completion of their new water system the old-fashioned way last week with a supper and thank you to initiators of the projects. The water for the community in northwest Sturgeon, comprising 61 residents, will actually serve about 75 people initially, according to Sturgeon M.D. councilor for the area Maurice Remillard. He said it is built to accommodate 300 people. Newly re-elected MLA Myrna Fyfe was on hand to turn on the water officially and other special guests included Sturgeon M.D. Reeve Clayton Crosier, and most members of M.D. council.

Alcomdale Water Co-op president Jim Falls gave a brief history of the system. He said the original concept began about five years ago when the sewer system was put in. "What we make up our minds to do," he said, "we try to get it done." They realized there was a lot more work to a water system than to a sewer system. The Co-op received the approval for government funding last fall, through a lot of hard work from Mrs. Fyfe. It is estimated the co-op received about \$140,000 in government grants. Mr. Falls said the first water was turned on last July. Reeve Crozier said, "he really feels good about the water system in Alcomdale." He joked he is glad there was no red ribbon to cut because Mr. Falls hates red tape. He added, however, that he hopes the co-op will always retain control of the water system, unlike the Manor Estates Water Co-op, which is asking the municipality to take it over. "It takes a lot of local initiative to get things done," he said.

Later, Mr. Remillard said the total cost of the system is about \$170,000. He said 22 taxpayers of Alcomdale paid the \$30,000 difference by contributing \$1,900 each toward the sewer and water system. They will not have to pay a frontage tax, as is the case with some other Sturgeon municipalities who opted to pay for the system through yearly payments. He said it is built with expansion in mind, and if the economy picks up it could mean growth for the community. They have 15 lots currently developed, with the ability to provide at least 50 more. The co-op will be responsible for collecting water bills, and maintenance of the system. The fee will be \$15 per month and that is simply to maintain the system.

1982, Nov. 10 – On Tap – Jim Falls, chief architect and driving force behind Alcomdale's new water system sits amid the pipes and pumps of his baby. The hamlet turned on the water earlier this year and now residents no longer have to man the pumps for a cool drink. The reservoir, located under the hamlet's curling rink, was designed to hold 40,000 gallons but is storing 15,000 and will do so until

there is a demand for an increase. At present the 80 hamlet residents use about 1,300 gallons of water daily, putting little pressure on the system's three pumps capable of pushing out a total of 90 gallons per minute. The community project was completed through the labours of Alcomdale residents. While the work was being done to build the reservoir under the arena, renovations to the curling rink/community hall kitchen were also made.

1983, March 29 – Delmar Groceries of Alcomdale held an auction sale of the remaining stock also freezers and coolers, etc. of the store on Saturday, March 12 in the Alcomdale Community Hall. The sale was a success in every respect the owners say. They will retain the post office but the hours will be shorter than when the store was operating.

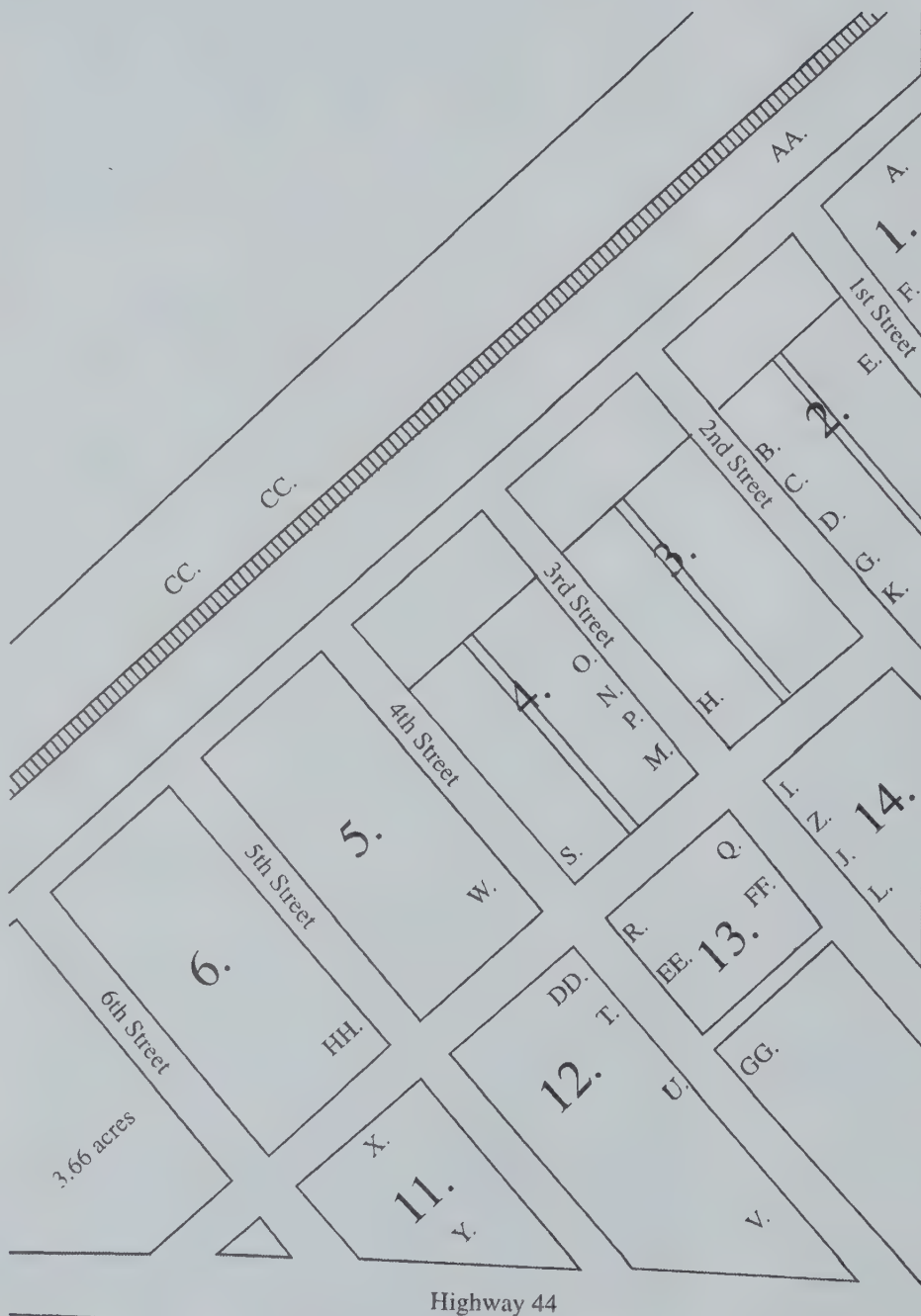
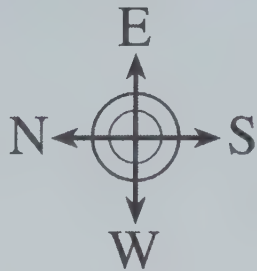
Alcomdale Timeline

1918	Alcombrack convinces the Railroad to build a siding for a future town.
1918	Alcomdale village established.
1919	Gillispie Elevator built by Voss Brothers (later Canadian Wheat Pool), managed (1920) by J.D.F. Morin, managed (1922 – 1923) by Wm Jorgenson later Albert O'Brien.
1919*	Lovelock – Pettibone Store and Post Office built.
1919	(after) Federal Grain Company built by Voss Brothers.
1920	(pre) C.C. Express, Alberta Government Telephones, Public School, Dominion Government Telegraph Office, Garage of A. Constantine, Union Bank – Jas R. Rowlay (Manager), Imperial Oil Limited – Pettibone, *Aslin General Store, Moore Hotel, Horse Barn and Blacksmith – George Moore.
1920	Frontier Lumber Co. Ltd. – P. (Porter) G. Heath (Manager).
1922	Massey Harris Dealership – Pettibone.
1924	Meat Market and Butcher Shop – Tom Spargo.
1928	Custom Truck Business – Pettibone (Stockyards near railroad track). Through the years, Cream Truck Service – R. Pettibone, James Tomtem and Bill Bychuk.
1930	Alcomdale Community League.
1931	Libke Store, later owners Mike Dyvernchuk, Maurice Remillard.
1937	Massey Harris Dealership and Garage – Alan Mills also Cream Truck delivery and School Bus service.
1938	Blacksmith Shop, Garage and Filling

Station – Willis Collins, also Lineman for Mutual Telephone Company.

Date	
Unknown	Pool Hall and Dance Hall – Hepburn.
Date	
Unknown	Garage – Lorer bought by Wilfred Cyre (auto repair mechanic).
1943	United Grain Growers purchased Federal Grain and Canadian Wheat Pool (Gillispie).
1948	Alcomdale 4-H Junior Beef Club formed.
1948	Alcomdale 4-H Junior Grain Club formed – ended 1960.
1950	Lalonde's Auto Wreckers and Scrap Iron Business started.
1951	Alcomdale 4-H Junior Barley Club formed – ended 1953.
1953	Alcomdale 4-H Beef Club formed.
1953	Alcomdale 4-H Oat Club formed.
1950s	Massey Harris changed to Massey Ferguson.
1957	Stephen's Anglican Church dedicates new building.
1958	Alcomdale Curling Rink.
1958	Permit to Spargo Brothers to sell Liquefied Petroleum Gas (propane).
1959	Alcomdale Public Library.
1962	Tornado rips thru Alcomdale Area.
1962	Robinson "Pool Hall" application approved.
1964	Spargo sells to Jim Falls "Falls Farm Dealer and Fertilizer."
1969	School sold to Mark Kinsella for Honey Business.
1970	Falls Fertilizer builds new storage facilities by railroad tracks.
1971	Post Office moves to new location across highway.
1972	United Grain Growers built a new annex using material from elevator that was torn down.
1977	Alcomdale Development Co-op, sewer system brought to Alcomdale.
1980	Bamill School Reunion.
1981	Alcomdale Water Co-op, new water supply for Alcomdale.
1988	Store closes down.
1993	Elevator is closed down.
1994	Elevator is torn down.
2004	Honey Business land was sold.
2005	Old school (Honey Business) burns down.
2006	Alcomdale Heritage and School Reunion held in Alcomdale.

TOWN OF ALCOMDALE



The early years and recent owners:

- A. Mills Garage, Massey Harris Farm Agent, Cream Truck Service & School Bus Service (1920 Original site of Pettibone Imperial Agency & Stockyards)
- B. Elevator house
- C. Eric Hodgin residence
- D. Bill & Hilda Cunningham residence
- E. Bulk Station
- F. Mills residence
- G. Tom Spargo Sr. residence
- H. Union Bank - Jas. R. Rowley (Manager)
- I. Lovelock/Pettibone General Store & Post Office (1920 - original site)
 - D. Whitson
 - Sandmeier
 - R. Robinson
 - J. Lister
 - M. Remillard
 - J. Burrows
- J. Richard (Dick) Whitson Bulk Fuel
- K. St. Stephen's Anglican Church
- L. Wilfred Cyre Auto Repair -Mechanic & residence
- M. Alcomdale Hall & Pool Hall -Mr. William Hepburn
- N. Jack & Beryl Bailey residence
- O. Bill Gray residence
- P. Dan Brenneis residence
- Q. Spargo Implements & Fertilizer (Bought out John Aslin Machinery Agent)
- R. Teacherage (1 of 2)
- S. Curling Rink
- T. Library (Former Teacherage)
- U. Alcomdale School-Honey Factory
- V. Collins Garage-Blacksmith, Filling Station & Linemen for the Mutual Telephone Co.
- W. Lalonde's Salvage and residence
- X. Hamilton residence
- Y. Thompson residence
- Z. Ducarmes residence
- AA. Railway Station
- BB. Libke General Store -Mike Dyvernchuck - Maurice Remillard residence & Post Office
- CC. Elevator Site
- DD. Ray Robinson residence - Robert Sparling residence
- EE. Rick & Dawn Palmer residence
- FF. Fall's Fertilizer (other location east of town)
- GG. Jim Falls residence - Jim Mudge residence
- HH. Mike Elder residence

Actual Sites Unknown for the following:

- 1. George Moore- Horse Barn & Blacksmith
- 2. 1920, Garage - A. Constantine
- 3. 1920, Frontier Lumber Co. Ltd. P.G. Heath (Manager)
- 4. Fedunko

***Special Note:**

Loveloek Store owners: Richard (Dick) and Charles Whitson; Ray Robinson (with pool hall); John Lister; Maurice Remillard (Delmar Groceries) till 1983; Jim and Debbie Burrows 1987 – 1988; among others for short periods of time. Presently residence of Irene Gaetz.

Aslin General Store and Allis Chalmers Machinery Agent; Spargo Brothers Cochshutt Machinery, Trucking Fertilizer and Propane Agent; Falls Cockshutt Dealer; Falls Fertilizer

Egg Lake History

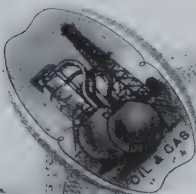
Egg Lake, Saskatchewan, near Lac La Ronge N.W.T. (28-56-26 W4th) was known in the 1800's as the sight of a Métis community. The present day border of the 4th Meridian between Alberta and Saskatchewan was not the same border used between 1901 provisional districts. Between 1887 and 1896 Alberta suffered drought after drought.

Soon after, the "Grande Brule" (Great Fire) covered the area from St. Albert to Fort Assiniboine. This area was also named Grande Brule (Morinville) and vicinity.

Egg Lake is often associated with the coalmine that was started in the area. Many families lived there and worked for the mine. The 1901 Egg Lake Census indicates approximately 37 families lived in the area at that time. As well as the mine, there was also a post office and a general store.

Egg Lake Post Office (from Canada Post Archives)

Name of Office:	Egg Lake
Federal Electoral district:	Edmonton, Alberta
Dates:	Established September 1897, Closed May 1915
Location:	NE 28-56-26-W4th
Postmasters:	
Pascal Marechal	September 1897 – May 1898





PROVINCE OF ALBERTA L-K. **B 7749**

LICENSE

In lieu of 184 L
DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIES AND LABOUR

ISSUED AT EDMONTON, PROVINCE OF ALBERTA THIS 7th DAY OF December 19 51	THIS LICENSE SHALL CONTINUE IN FULL FORCE AND EFFECT UNTIL TERMINATED OR OTHERWISE ARRANGED
--	--

MRS. JULIETTE AMIOT (AMIOT STORE)

EGG LAKE, Alberta.
IS HEREBY LICENSED AS

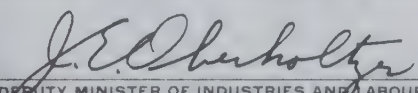


AN OPERATOR OF A GENERAL STORE

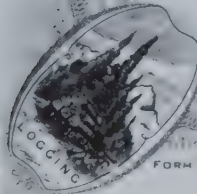
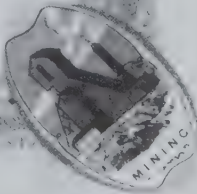


THIS LICENSE IS NOT TRANSFERABLE AND SHOULD BE PRESERVED AND POSTED IN A CONSPICUOUS PLACE. SHOULD LICENSEE CEASE TO OPERATE BUSINESS, LICENSE MUST BE RETURNED TO DEPARTMENT.

GOVERNMENT OF THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA



DEPUTY MINISTER OF INDUSTRIES AND LABOUR

FORM TI-103

Prosper Gory	January 1899 – June 1899
Narcisse Beaudry	October 1899 – March 1902
Nathaniel E. Logan	June 1902 – March 1914
Jean Baptiste L'Hirondelle	May 1914 – May 1915

Egg Lake Business Licenses

(Information from the Provincial Archives)

- Amiot Store, Egg Lake, Alberta – Mrs. Juliette Amiot received her license as an operator of a general store at Egg Lake on December 7, 1951.
- Egg Lake Coal Company – Henri Paepe and Thomas J. Logan “acquired the interest of Mr. Paul Côté in a small strip mine on the NE¼ of Sec 36, Township 56, Range 26, West of the 4th M”. File M.A.31 of the Board of Public Utility Commissioners issued Certificate No. 23 on November 19, 1941 to “... hereby certify that the applicants can provide for the cost of carrying on such operations for a period of Twelve (12) months.”

Fines Imposed by Justice of the Peace

(notes from the Department of the Attorney General)

Thomas Joseph Dwyer of Egg Lake became Justice of the Peace, January 30, 1908. Document signed by Alex C. Rutherford.

1909 – Buying unbranded moosehead, Egg Lake, convicted, Fine \$5.00 plus costs, Total: \$5.50.

1910 – Common Assault on wife, Egg Lake, cost imposed: \$2.25.

1912 – Cruelty to Horses (Section 542), Morinville, Fine \$5.00 plus costs, Total: \$6.75, Wm McDonald, J.P., presiding justice.

1912 – Drunkenness and Causing a Disturbance (Section 238), St. Albert, Fine \$2.00 plus costs, Total: \$8.00. W.L. Veness, J.P., presiding justice.

Some Statistics on Births, Marriages and Deaths

Births:

- Mary Jane Savard – daughter of Antoine Savard and Marguerite Bisson – Egg Lake – 1873
- August Lirondelle – son of Jean Baptiste Lirondelle – Egg Lake – 1880
- Marie Victoria Logan – Egg Lake – 1884
- Joseph Louis Gagnon – Egg Lake – Jan. 26, 1909
- Marie Marguerite Page – Egg Lake – Dec. 27, 1909
- Justine L'Hirondelle – Egg Lake – Feb. 12, 1909
- J.B. L'Hirondelle – Egg Lake/ Morinville – Oct. 5, 1915
- Noel Ricard – son of Joseph Ricard – Mearns – Dec. 25, 1929
- Joseph Albert Cloutier – son of Cyrille Cloutier – Egg Lake – Dec. 20, 1929
- Angus Alexander Morrison – son of Alexander Morrison – Mearns – July 5, 1930
- Bertin Harold Raymond L'Hirondelle – son of Bertin L'Hirondelle – Mearns – Mar. 22, 1931
- Ruth Irma Marie Borle – daughter of Florent Borle – Mearns – May 23, 1935

Baptisms:

- George Logan – child of Alfred J. Logan – Feb. 22, 1908
- Charles Logan – child of John W. Logan – Mar. 7, 1908
- Joe Levie – child of Joe Levie – Mar. 20, 1908
- Albert Ringuette – child of Elie Ringuette – Mar. 26, 1908
- Magleur Antoine L'Hirondelle – child of Antoine L'Hirondelle – May 4, 1908
- Joseph Louis Gagnon – child of Napoleon Gagon – Oct. 28, 1908

FORM No. 348—Statutory Declaration—(2-41) THE WILSON STATIONERY CO., LTD.—92593

Canada
Province of Alberta

In the Matter of The Mines Act.

To WIT:

I, WE, HENRI PAEPE, Mine Laborer, and THOMAS LOGAN, Farmer, both of the Village of Mearns, in the Province of Alberta do solemnly declare that:

1. We propose to carry on coal mining operations according to the following particulars.
2. Our full names, addresses and occupations are Henri Paepe, Mine Laborer, Thomas Logan, Farmer, both of the Village of Mearns, in the Province of Alberta.
3. The firm name will be a partnership known as the Egg Lake Coal Company.
4. The legal description of the mine location is the North-east quarter (N.E.¼), of Section Thirty-six (36), Township Fifty-six (56), Range Twenty-six (26), West of the 4th Meridian.
5. The nearest shipping point? It is proposed to run this mine as a truck mine and there will be no particular shipping point.
6. It is proposed to operate the mine from September to March, inclusive, in each year.
7. It is proposed to employ two (2) men in the mine operations.
8. Estimated production for the period of operation, one thousand (1000) tons per annum.
9. Estimated cost of production, One Dollar (\$1.00) per ton.
10. Selling price of the coal, Two Dollars and Fifty cents (\$2.50) per ton.
11. The available market will be with the local farmers.
12. This mine organization owns one (1) Fairbank 10-ton Scale, Mine office and miscellaneous equipment.
13. The cash capital available is One thousand, Six Hundred Dollars (\$1,600.00).
14. The mine owns no other capital.

And I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing it to be true and knowing that it is of the same force and effect as if made under oath and by virtue of "The Canada Evidence Act."

Declared before me at the Town of Morinville in the Province of Alberta, by the said Henri Paepe and the said Thomas Logan, severally, this 17th day of Nov. A.D. 1941.

Commissioner for oaths in and for the Province of Alberta.

- Clare Dwyer – child of Thos. J. Dwyer – Nov. 28, 1908
- Lina Victoria L'Hirondelle – child of Johny L'Hirondelle – Oct 29, 1908
- Patrick Campion – child of Francois Campion – Apr. 3, 1909
- Mary Margurette Page – child of Joe page – May 1, 1909
- Victoria Ringuette – child of Elie Ringuette – May 10, 1909
- Victoria Killian – child of Fred Killian – May 12, 1909
- Margueritte L'Hirondelle – child of Antoine L'Hirondelle – Sept. 6, 1909
- Marie Lucie Logan – child of Alfred Logan – Sept 14, 1909
- Joseph Noie Bouchard – child of Wilfred Bouchard – Nov 10, 1909
- William Andrew L'Hirondelle – child of Antoine L'Hirondelle – Aug. 31, 1910
- Sarah Dwyer – child of Thos. Dwyer – Oct. 31, 1910
- Billy Logan – child of John W. Logan – July 25, 1910
- Antoine Corviette – child of Joseph Corviette – Dec. 5, 1910
- Henry Logan – child of Alfred Logan – Apr. 26, 1911
- Mary Clothilde Page – child of Joseph Page – Dec. 22, 1911
- Frank Logan – child of John Logan – Mar. 5, 1912
- Mary Louise Logan – child of Alfred Logan – Feb. 16, 1912
- Joseph Morris Bouchard – child of Wilfred Bouchard – Oct. 24, 1912
- Victor L'Hirondelle – child of Antony L'Hirondelle – Mar. 17, 1911
- Robert L'Hirondelle – child of Antony L'Hirondelle – Apr. 25, 1912
- Tom Killian – child of Fred Killian – Mar. 6, 1911
- Charles Romeo L'Hirondelle – child of Antony L'Hirondelle – June 20, 1912
- Harvey Daniel Cunningham – child of T.D. Cunningham – Apr. 16, 1913
- Ellesse Beatrice L'Hirondelle – child of Antony L'Hirondelle – July 15, 1913
- Mary Magdelene Logan – child of John Logan – Mar. 13, 1914
- Ivan Milina Bouchard – child of Wilfred Bouchard – Apr. 14, 1914
- Thomas Logan – child of Alfred Logan – Sept. 13, 1914
- Olive Gertrude Cunningham – child of Tobie Cunningham – Nov. 22, 1914

- Margaret Logan – child of Alfred Logan – Apr. 22, 1916
- Grace Dorothy L'Hirondelle – child of Antoine L'Hirondelle – May 30, 1916
- Joseph Gordon Cunningham – child of Tobie Cunningham – July 2, 1916
- Frank Arthur Logan – child of Norman Logan – July 5, 1916

Marriages:

- Tobie Cunningham and Maud Emma Logan – June 18, 1912 – Rev. P. Lebré
- Edward Donna Caron and Clarrisse E. Petrin – Nov. 25, 1912 – Rev. P. Lebré
- George Brown and Lucie L'Hirondelle – July 21, 1913 – Rev. P. Lebré
- August Schlereth & Mary Anne Sauvoireaux (?) – Dec. 24, 1919 – Egg Lake – Rev. P. Lebré
- Mervyn Rutherford Owens & Victoria Logan – Nov. 23, 1922 – Egg Lake – Rev. P. Lebré
- Henri Chabot & Aurora Roudeau – Feb. 10, 1926 – St. Charles – Rev. A. Wattell
- Leon Vandal & Georgina Gagnon – Jan. 15, 1930 – Mearns – Rev. P. Lebré
- Frederick John Altmiks & May Lamoureux – June 22, 1931 – Mearns – Fr. Stacey
- Robert Edgar Junck & Marie Fern Clement – Sept. 5, 1932 – Mearns – Fr. Stacey
- James Mateor & Cecile Mary Brassard – Dec. 3, 1932 – St. Charles, Mearns – Fr. Stacey
- Eugene Pelletier & Louise Nobert – Nov. 6, 1934 – St. Charles, Mearns – Fr. Stacey
- Henry Stitsen & Anna Marie Frederick (nee Miller) – Nov. 11, 1934 – Mearns – Fr. Stacey
- Joseph Kluthe & Emma Matilda Thomas – Jan. 8, 1935 – St. Charles – Fr. Stacey
- August Kluthe & Josephine Thomas – Apr. 23, 1935 – St. Charles – Fr. Stacey
- Alois Altmiks & Louisa Kluthe – Apr. 23, 1935 – St. Charles – Fr. Stacey
- Maurice L'Hirondelle & Marguerite Majeau – May 1, 1935 – St. Charles – Fr. Stacey

Deaths:

- Joseph Thomas Logan – Dec. 28, 1930 – child of Norman Logan – interred St. Charles Cemetery
- Bertin Harold Raymond L'Hirondelle – Feb. 21, 1932 – child of Mac L'Hirondelle – interred St. Charles Cemetery
- Lizzie Byers – Feb. 24, 1932 – child of Nick Byers – interred St. Charles Cemetery
- Pascal Marchalle – Oct. 24, 1932 – child of Mr. Rottot – interred St. Charles Cemetery
- Alfred Joseph Logan – Apr. 10, 1934 – child of A. C. Logan – interred St. Charles Cemetery

- Victor L'Hirondelle – Jan. 4, 1935 – child of Antoine L'Hirondelle – interred St. Charles Cemetery
- Julia Laurence L'Hirondelle – Jun. 22, 1937 – child of Antoine L'Hirondelle – interred St. Charles Cemetery
- Mary Byer – Mar. 12, 1940 – child of Nick Byer – interred St. Charles Cemetery

"Of all National Assets, Archives are the most Precious; They are the Gift of one Generation to Another." (Sir Arthur G. Doughty, Dominion of Canada – 1924)

Line #	Numbered in order of visitation		Personal Description							
	House	Family or Household	Name of each person in family or household on 31st March, 1901.	Sex.	Colour	Relationship to head of family or household.	Single, married, widowed or divorced.	Month and date of birth.	Year of birth.	Age at last birthday.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
1	1	Sawyer Philip	M		Head	S	Jan 12	1853	48	d
2	2	Pickering Richard	M		Head	M	Apr 25	1865	36	d
3	2	Pickering Mary	F		Wife	M	Mar 4	1866	35	d
4	2	Pickering Nathan	M		Son	S	Sep 3	1885	16	d
5	2	Pickering Mary Anne	F		Daughter	S	May 29	1887	13	d
6	2	Pickering Edward	M		Son	S	Oct 30	1894	6	d
7	2	Pickering Agnes Rose	F		Daughter	S	Jan 27	1900	1	d
8	2	Lockman Davis	M		Lodger	S	Feb	1866	35	d
9	3	Shaver Alonzo	M		Head	M	Jul 11	1839	61	d
10	3	Shaver Mathilda	F		Wife	M	Apr 24	1848	52	d
P11	3	Shaver John Frederic	M		Son	S	Dec 19	1875	25	d
12	3	Shaver Willam	M		Son	S	Jun 7	1879	21	d
13	3	Shaver Mabel	F		Daughter	S	Sep 19	1883	17	d
14	3	Shaver Irene	F		Daughter	S	Feb 17	1889	12	d
15	4	Owens Robert	M		Head	W	Feb	1840	61	d
16	5	Shoveller John	M		Head	M	Aug 12	1860	40	d
P17	5	Shoveller Mary Ellen	F		Wife	M	Oct 27	1864	36	d
18	6	Noël Nestor	M		Head	S	Sep 17	1867	33	d
19	6	Noël Norbert	M		Lodger	S	May 13	1871	29	d
20	7	Claverie Jean	M		Head	W	Aug 16	1869	31	d
21	8	Schnitzler Theodore	M		Head	M	Nov 9	1855	45	d
22	8	Schnitzler Mary	F		Wife	M	Apr 3	1856	44	d
23	8	Schnitzler Anna	F		Daughter	S	Aug 11	1879	21	d
P24	8	Schnitzler Jacob	M		Son	S	Apr 30	1883	17	d

<http://automatedgenealogy.com/census/View.jsp?id=67760&desc=1901+Census+of+C...> 11/2/2007

1901 Egg Lake Census

25	8	Schnitzler Clara	F	Daughter	S	Aug 9	1885	15	d
26	8	Schnitzler Mathieu	M	Son	S	Sep 18	1887	13	d
27	8	Schnitzler Mary	F	Daughter	S	Feb 13	1890	11	d
28	8	Schnitzler Barbara	F	Daughter	S	Oct 31	1891	9	d
29	8	Schnitzler Michel	M	Son	S	May 29	1894	6	d
30	8	Schnitzler Antoinetta	F	Daughter	S	Apr 15	1897	3	d
31	8	Walhof Martha	F	Adopted Daughter	S	Jul 29	1900		d
P 32	9	Fave? Alvin?	M	Head	S	Aug	1865	35	d
P 33	10	Beaudry Narcisse	M	Head	M	Jan	1847	54	d
34	10	Beaudry Lucie	F	Wife	M	Mar 5	1848	53	d
35	10	Beaudry Justine	F	Daughter	S	Oct 26	1878	22	d
36	10	Beaudry Placidie	F	Daughter	S	Nov 19	1882	18	d
37	10	Lirondelle James Willam	M	Adopted Son	S	Nov 15	1899	1	d
P 38	10	Ladouceur Louise	M	?	W	?	1816	84	d
39	11	Lirondelle Jean Bapt	M	Head	W	Apr	1855	45	d
40	11	Lirondelle Antoine	M	Son	S	Oct 7	1878	22	d
41	11	Lirondelle Auguste	M	Son	S	Oct 26	1880	20	d
42	11	Lirondelle Joseph	M	Son	S	Sep 20	1882	18	d
43	11	Lirondelle Elisabeth	F	Daughter	S	Aug 28	1884	16	d
44	11	Lirondelle Lucie	F	Daughter	S	Feb 8	1886	15	d
45	11	Lirondelle Johny	M	Son	S	Sep 13	1887	13	d
46	11	Lirondelle Flora	F	Daughter	S	Jul 21	1895	5	d
47	11	Lirondelle Clara	F	Daughter	S	Apr 5	1897	3	d
P 48	12	R_o_ Arthur	M	Head	M	Jan 18	1864	37	d
49	12	R_o_ Rosalie	F	Wife	M	Dec 22	1877	23	d
P 50									

Line #	Numbered in order of visitation		Personal Description							
	H o u s e	Family or Household	Name of each person in family or household on 31st March, 1901.	Sex	C o l o u r	Relationship to head of family or household.	Single, married, widowed or divorced.	Month and date of birth.	Year of birth.	Age at last birthday.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
P 1	12	R_o_ Marie Sarah	F	Daughter	S	Jan 23	1899	2	d	
2	12	R_o_ Wilfrid	M	Son	S	Jun 28	1900		d	
3	13	Müller Mathias	M	Head	S	Jul 20	1855	45	d	
4	14	Killan Alfred	M	Head	M	Apr 12	1872	28	d	
5	14	Killan Lucie	F	Wife	M	Aug	1872	28	d	
6	14	Savard Henry	M	Adopted Son	S	May	1895	5	d	
7	14	Killan Paul	M	Son	S	May 22	1900		d	
8	15	Marechal Paschal	M	Head	W	Jan 1	1838	63	d	
9	15	Short Caroline	F	Servant	S	Jul 13	1870	30	d	
10	16	Short Johny	M	Head	M	Feb 2	1873	28	d	
11	16	Short Josephine	F	Wife	M	Nov 12	1873	27	d	
12	16	Short Henry	M	Son	S	Mar 20	1894	5	d	
13	16	Short Rachel	F	Daughter	S	Mar 26	1899	2	d	
14	17	Chalifoux Paul	M	Head	M	?	1834	66	d	
15	17	Chalifoux Genevieve	F	Wife	M	?	1850	50	d	
P @ 16	17	Chalifoux Narcisse	M	Son	S	Mar 20	1878	23	d	
17	18	Savard Antoine	M	Head	M	?	1819	81	d	
18	18	Savard Marguerite	F	Wife	M	?	1820	80	d	
19	19	Savard Octave	M	Head	M	?	1868	32	d	
20	19	Savard Julienne	F	Wife	M	?	1877	23	d	
21	19	Savard Philippe	M	Son	S	?	1888	12	d	
22	19	Savard Helene	F	Daughter	S	Sep	1894	6	d	
23	19	Savard Charley	M	Son	S	Oct	1898	2	d	
24	19	Savard Edouard	M	Son	S	Aug	1900		d	
25	20	Savard David	M	Head	W	?	1856	44	d	
26	21	Dupuis Henry	M	Head	M	?	?	?	d	

27	21	Dupuis Flora	F	Wife	M	Sep 1882	18	d
28	21	Dupuis Maria	F	Daughter	S	Sep 1899	1	d
29	22	Savard Theodore	M	Head	M	? 1858	42	d
30	22	Savard Emerence	F	Wife	M	Jul 1869	31	d
31	22	Savard Albertine	F	Daughter	S	Aug 15 1887	13	d
32	22	Savard Marie Louise	F	Daughter	S	Dec 19 1888	12	d
33	22	Savard Willam	M	Son	S	Jul 3 1890	10	d
34	22	Savard Emilie	F	Daughter	S	May 10 1892	8	d
35	22	Savard Marie Jeanne	F	Daughter	S	Jun 9 1894	6	d
36	22	Savard Julien	M	Son	S	Jul 2 1899	1	d
37	23	Tremblay Raphael	M	Head	M	Jul 16 1802	98	d
38	23	Tremblay Catherine	F	Wife	M	? 1804	96	d
39	24	Savard Alexandre	M	Head	M	? 1835	65	d
40	24	Savard Thérèse	F	Wife	M	? 1827	73	d
41	24	Savard Theodore	M	Adopted Son	S	? 1886	14	d
42	25	Graham John	M	Head	M	Mar 8 1867	34	d
43	25	Graham Marie Louise	F	Wife	M	Dec 16 1874	26	d
44	25	Graham Julia	F	Daughter	S	Mar 25 1898	3	d
45	25	Graham Marceline	F	Daughter	S	Aug 27 1899	1	d
46	26	Dela Ronde John	M	Head	M	Mar 1855	46	d
47	26	Dela Ronde Louisa	F	Wife	M	1870	30	d
48	26	Dela Ronde Johnny	M	Son	S	Oct 1883	17	d
49	26	Dela Ronde Marie	F	Daughter	S	Jul 1886	14	d
50	26	Dela Ronde Louis	M	Son	S	Oct 25 1888	12	d

29	31	Coninghan Maria	F	Wife	M	Apr 24 1873	27	d
30	31	Coninghan Robert	M	Son	S	Jun 9 1900		d
31	31	Coninghan Marie Clotilde	F	Daughter	S	Mar 6 1894	7	d
32	32	Lirondelle Antoine	M	Head	M	Dec 11 1868	32	d
33	32	Lirondelle Lucie	F	Wife	M	Apr 17 1875	25	d
34	32	Lirondelle Zephir	M	Son	S	Jun 1896	4	d
35	32	Lirondelle Louise	F	Daughter	S	Jul 21 1898	2	d
36	32	Lirondelle Albertine	F	Daughter	S	Aug 8 1899	1	d
37	32	Lirondelle Bertin	M	Son	S	Feb 20 1901		d
38	33	Smith Gerimiah	M	Head	M	Apr 11 1850	50	d
39	33	Smith Amanda	F	Wife	M	Apr 9 1854	46	d
40	33	Smith Edison	M	Son	S	Jan 7 1876	25	d
41	33	Smith Bessie	F	Daughter	S	Dec 31 1885	15	d
42	33	Smith Harry	M	Son	S	Mar 16 1894	7	d
43	34	Hill Robin	M	Head	S	Sep 8 1857	43	d
44	34	Hill Melissa	F	Sister	S	Jan 16 1856	45	d
45	34	Hill Olive	F	Niece	S	Aug 4 1889	11	d
46	35	Clarke Maurice	M	Head	S	Apr 16 1881	19	d
47	36	Kaessler Joseph	M	Head	M	Nov 6 1870	31	d
48	36	Kaessler Jeanette	F	Wife	M	Feb 15 1881	20	d
49	37	Beaudry Alfred	M	Head	M	Mar 18 1869	32	d
50	37	Beaudry Caroline	F	Wife	M	May 2 1872	28	d

Line #	Numbered in order of visitation		Personal Description							
	House	Family or Household	Name of each person in family or household on 31st March, 1901.	Sex.	Colours	Relationship to head of family or household.	Single, married, widowed or divorced.	Month and date of birth.	Year of birth.	Age at last birthday.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
1	26	Dela Ronde Maggie	F		Daughter	S	?	1891	9	D
2	26	Dela Ronde Mathilde	F		Daughter	S	?	1893	7	D
3	26	Dela Ronde Paul	M		Son	S	?	1896	4	D
4	26	Dela Ronde Lottie	F		Daughter	S	?	1898	2	D
5	27	Ahmal Daniel	M		Head	M	Jan 22	1872	29	D
6	27	Ahmal Evelina	F		Wife	M	Aug 28	1876	24	D
7	27	Ahmal Georges	M		Son	S	Feb 9	1894	7	D
8	27	Ahmal Florence	F		Daughter	S	Aug 25	1895	5	D
9	27	Ahmal Willam	M		Son	S	Apr 17	1892	3	D
10	27	Ahmal Emma	F		Daughter	S	Jul 25	1898	2	D
11	28	Naud Edouard	M		Head	M	Mar	1857	44	D
12	28	Naud Henriette	F		Wife	M	?	1875	25	D
13	28	Naud Gaspar	M		Son	S	?	1893	7	D
14	28	Naud Theodore	M		Son	S	?	1898	2	D
15	28	Naud Leon	M		Son	S	Jul	1899	1	D
16	29	Pagé Joseph	M		Head	M	?	1864	36	D
17	29	Pagé Marie Jeanne	F		Wife	M	Nov 25	1873	27	D
18	29	Pagé Francoise	F		Daughter	S	Nov 5	1893	7	D
19	29	Pagé Albertine	F		Daughter	S	Mar 25	1900	1	D
20	30	Logan Nathaniel	M		Head	M	Jul	1853	47	D
21	30	Logan Sarah	F		Wife	M	Jul	1853	47	D
22	30	Logan Marie Jeanne	F		Daughter	S	Jun 14	1879	21	D
23	30	Logan Alfred J	M		Son	S	Dec 6	1882	18	D
24	30	Logan Victoria	F		Daughter	S	Nov 9	1884	16	D
25	30	Logan Nathaniel	M		Son	S	Nov 16	1886	14	D
26	30	Logan Maria Ama	F		Daughter	S	Oct 9	1888	12	D
27	30	Logan Patrik	M		Son	S	Jun 20	1891	9	D
28	31	Coningham Daniel	M		Head	M	Jun 24	1864	36	D

Numbered in order of visitation		Personal Description							
H o u s e	Family or Household	Name of each person in family or household on 31st March, 1901.	Sex.	C o l o u r	Relationship to head of family or household.	Single, married, widowed or divorced.	Month and date of birth.	Year of birth.	Age at last birthday.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1		37	Beaudry Octave	M		Son	S	Oct 2	1892 8d
2		37	Beaudry Ned	M		Son	S	May 2	1894 6d
3		37	Beaudry Maria	F		Daughter	S	Jan 14	1898 3d
4		37	Beaudry Joseph	M		Son	S	Nov 2	1899 1d
5									

Egg Lake Coal Mine

By Dale Brenneis

The strip coal mine was located 3½ miles east and ½ mile north of Mearns. In 1940 Tommy Logan owned the coalmine site. He received the site from his Granddad's estate. At this time the coal was dumped in the tipple by horse, later an engine was bought. They would blast the eight-foot seam and pick up the coal with hand shovels. Most of the coal was found eight to 15 feet deep. There were different types of coal: lump, stoker and slack. About 50 per cent of the coal sold was slack. It was used for thawing in the winter. Stoker and lump was used more for heating.

In about 1952 Ivan Gouin rented the land from Tommy Logan, bought more land surrounding it and then took over the mine. Frank Fellow was the Mine Manager at this time and in about 1956 Leo Brenneis took over as Mine Manager. Coal at this time sold for \$4.50 ton lump, \$2.00 ton stoker and \$3.50 ton for slack. This included delivery. Coal was

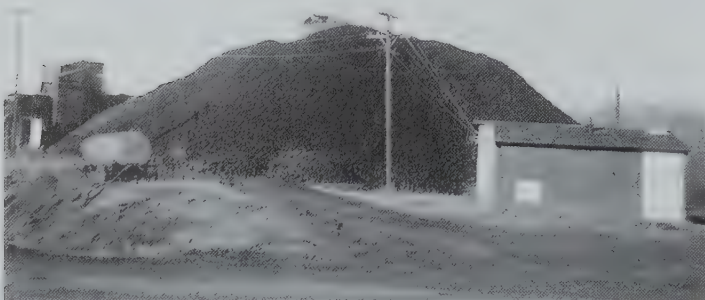


Egg Lake Coal Mine, 1955

trucked out to places like Edmonton Power. Also, many farmers used the coal.

The coalmine was a booming place. It employed about 20 to 30 people. Most employees were neighbours in the community. Family names included Logans, Boddez, Kluthes, DeRudders, Ringettes, just to name a few. The yard had a few homes where some of the employees resided. Some of the families living there were Art and Delia Logan, Pat and Mary Short and Leo and Honnoreana Brenneis. The yard had a cookhouse where the workers would go to eat warm meals prepared by women like Mary Short, Yvonne Pellisier and Honnoreana Brenneis.

The Egg Lake School was purchased and brought to the coal mine from its original site on August Kluthe's land. This building was used as a bunkhouse for the men. It was never used as a school at the coalmine.



Coal from the mine



Cook House, later the home of Dale Brenneis



Scale House at Egg Lake Coal Mine.

There were a few fatal accidents at the site. In 1954 Edward DeRudder was burnt and later died in hospital. He was 21 years old. Also, Firmin and Loreen Boddez lost two children, Rita and Dennis, from a drowning accident in one of the pits used as a local swimming hole.

As coal became less in demand, eventually in 1999 Egg Lake Coal Mine shut down. Reclamation was done and today all that remains of the coalmine site are a few holes and hills. Some of us, though, will never forget the memories we cherish from those days.

Today Egg Lake is considered a nature habitat surrounded by a variety of Wetlands, which is difficult to approach. The Beaver Beacon describes it as such, "On two sides, nearly overgrown old orchards provide raceways and bunking beds for the ample deer. We found a rosebush on the marshy south shore, and fleabanes (a variety of wild aster) blooming, with several other species, in the juniper and pine encroached fields. This ten-foot stone-lined well and rusty farm equipment was near the site of an old homestead on the north shore." John Bornadeo notes "Egg Lake is different than it looks. It looks like a shallow bog, but it's really 60 feet deep. Plus the acid level is very low. It must be spring fed."

Rich farmland surrounds Egg Lake today. Egg Lake and the more than one hundred years of history of the Métis people and their relatives who lived in the area speaks of our rich Alberta heritage.

Mearns History

By Janet (Sheehan) Boddez with input from Therese Ricard

Mearns was established in 1892. It is described as a hamlet west of Highway 44, approximately 14 kilometers northwest of Morinville. No one is sure how the name Mearns was chosen. Apparently, railway stations were often named by employees of the railroad. There is a Scottish place name that may have been the source for this Edmonton, Dunvegan and British Columbia Railway station, built in 1912. *Information from Wikipedia online encyclopedia tells us that the County of Kincardine or 'The Mearns' (from A'Mhaoime meaning The Stewartry) was a local government county on the coast of northeast Scotland. There is still a town in Scotland containing*

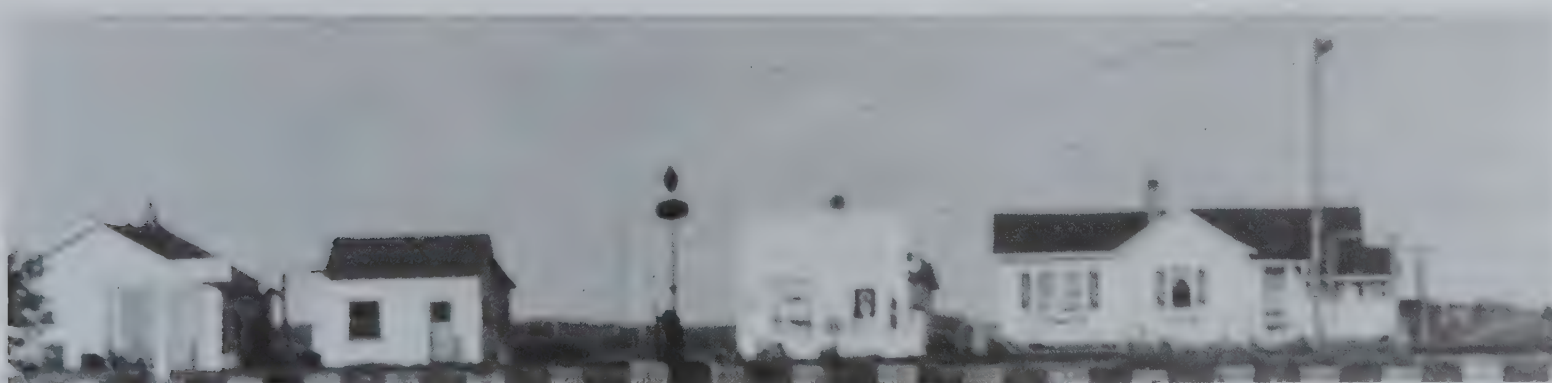
the name Mearns. It is Newton Mearns and is a small suburban town seven miles east of Glasgow.

With the derivative of the name Mearns suggesting "Stewertry", it is not surprising that the people of Mearns, Alberta over the years have been, and still are today, a beautiful example of stewardship.

Mearns Post Office

According to information taken from Canada Post Archives, the Mearns Post Office was established in June 1928 and operated out of Joseph Mederic Ricard's store northeast of present day Mearns, until March 1930 when a fire destroyed the store. Since records tell us that Mr. Ricard continued on as Postmaster until March 30, 1932, we assume that he handled mail for two years out of his home. Then, from December of 1932 to March 1934, Mr. Joseph Israel Houle held the position. In June of 1934 the Post Office moved into the hamlet of Mearns, operating out of the Mearns general store, and Emile Joseph Nobert became the Postmaster as well as the storeowner. He kept this post until October 26, 1945. Mrs. Annie Sagan then took over as Postmaster from November 6, 1945 to June 18, 1947 followed by Donald John Chute from May 1947 to September 27, 1948 and lastly Daniel Joseph Sheehan from September 28, 1948 to July 1961.

Her Majesty's mail arrived on the Barrhead train every Tuesday and Friday. Both incoming and outgoing mail was placed in heavy canvas locked bags. The postmaster would attach the bag of outgoing mail onto a hook hanging outside the railcar as it rolled slowly by. The incoming mailbags were tossed off the train onto the railway station platform. At one of the history book meetings this exchange of mail was discussed. We found out that in the 1950's, as the Mearns postmaster was tossing the outgoing bags onto that hook, it was Joan Polakovits' dad, Don McDonald, who was tossing the incoming bags onto the platform. He worked for Canada Post as railway mail clerk on NAR at the time. Everything from letters and family allowance



Downtown Mearns circa 1960. From left to right: the bus garage, the honeymoon cottage, Mearns General Store, and Sheehan's house

cheques to parcels from the Eaton's catalogue arrived in those bags. Mail order catalogues were once the definitive form of shopping. It was an exciting day the day that the train dropped off the catalogue orders. They held everything from Easter bonnets to cooking utensils and winter underwear. From the railway platform the mailbags were taken back to the general store and the letters and packages were sorted into individual boxes for each addressee. The postmaster was responsible for keeping detailed records for the Federal Government.

In the 1960s the mail was delivered to rural Post Offices by car driven by Armand Chalifoux and later by his son, Art. Locals say you could set your watch by Armand Chalifoux, he was so punctual.

At present, the area residents are being served out of the Morinville Post Office and mail is delivered to post boxes located throughout the district. The address for Mearns area now reads R.R. 2, Site 1, Box #, Morinville, Alberta T8R 1P5.

Our link to the outside world

The train brought the outside world to our houses. In winter and spring, snow and mud often made roads impassable so people relied on the train to deliver other merchandise. The Douziech's tell us that the bricks for their house were delivered by rail to Mearns. Local farmers received bags of fertilizer this way. When the train arrived everything had to be unloaded by hand as efficiently as possible so the train would stay on schedule.

The station house

Beside the train platform was the station house. It was a little red painted building with Mearns written across the front and on the sides. Inside was a pot bellied stove, stacks of wood, and benches lining the walls. Inside one of the benches there was a red flag on a stick that was used to flag the train down. Anyone wanting the train to stop would stand on the platform and wave the flag. There was also a lantern that was used after dark. Occasionally local people would take the train to Edmonton or Morinville and would wait for the train in the station. Therese Ricard remembers celebrating a birthday by hopping the train to Morinville all by herself. A day spent without children was a luxury for a busy mom in those days. When she arrived in Morinville, her mother hosted a birthday party for her and after the party she boarded the northbound train back home. A special day well deserved and well spent thanks to the railway. Mrs. Lavallée would take the train in to Morinville to visit her son who was boarding at the convent there.

The stationhouse was never locked and more

than a few nights it was shelter for hitchhikers (or hobos) who rode the rails and would jump off the train to spend a night inside. The children in Mearns played there during the day, using it like a clubhouse.

Grain elevators in small towns stood as sentinels

As in all small towns there were two grain elevators that stood like sentinels. Mearns had the UGG (United Grain Growers) and the Alberta Pacific. The agent for Alberta Pacific lived directly across the road from the elevator. The agents who lived in that house over the years were Ike (Alice) Houle, Clement (Denise) Lavallée and Charles (Barbara) Pelletier. In her story for this book, Mrs. Lavallée described the residence as follows: *"We lived in a little bungalow across the road from the elevator. Oh, I loved it. It had beautiful surroundings. The yard was all landscaped with green grass and caragana bushes all around. I thought I was in heaven. The lady that was there before me, Mrs. Houle I believe, was a very good housekeeper."* After the elevators were gone, the house was purchased by Pat and Sophie Hittinger. Sophie passed away in 2005 and Colin Fraser now lives there. A new house is in the process of being built on an acreage between the former Alberta Pacific house and the Ricard house, by Paul and Wanda Thompson.

The United Grain Growers agent lived across the tracks. Agents there included J. Lamarr, J.N. Ricard, A.C. Milne, B.P. McKinnon, Doyle Cochlin, Lucien Letourneau, and Hugh Kennedy. Mrs. Kennedy was Father Merchant's housekeeper the first couple years she was in Mearns. After Mr. Kennedy's retirement, Ludick Banack became agent and he, along with his wife Pauline, moved to Mearns and raised their family there. The last agent was Dan Brenneis who lived in Alcomdale and looked after both the Alcomdale and Mearns UGG elevators. The UGG house was purchased by Patti and Gordon Worobec who taught school in the surrounding districts. They built a new house on the site. Bob and Sheila Bryan were the next residents and Steve and Lillian Tezner were the last residents. Lillian passed away while living in Mearns.



Hugh and Agnes Kennedy stop for a visit at Sheehans



Original UGG house in Mearns, 1933.

One of the original Mearns families

Joseph Ricard owned a considerable amount of land in the area and donated land for the church. The Ricards, Joe and Rosanna, originally lived northeast of the hamlet and operated the first store at that location. The locals referred to Joe as Joe (Cash) Ricard because he proudly claimed that he only accepted 'cash'. In 1930, after a fire destroyed the house and store, they moved into the hamlet and lived in a granary for a couple of years until they finished building their house in 1930. The house still stands and is occupied today by Therese Ricard who, at age 80, is spending her 63nd year there. She married Emile Ricard in 1945 and they raised their family of



The Ricard Homestead, 2007

six in this house. At one time there was a small house to the north for the Ricard's hired man, Mr. Art Lalonde and his wife Agnes and their daughter.

Mearns General Store

In the center of town was the Mearns General Store, which was built by Emile Nobert. Emile's son, Roger, remembers that in 1934 his dad built a basement foundation and moved some granaries to Mearns. These granaries eventually became their house, a store and garage. It was the first general store right in the hamlet of Mearns.

BEST MERCHANDISE GOOD SERVICE AT OUR GENERAL STORE	
E. J. NOBERT	
GROCERIES, CONFECTIONERY, GAS, OIL & GREASE	
PHONE MORINVILLE R507	
MEARNS, ALTA. 04/01/1947	
M. <i>[Signature]</i>	
2	Drums Gasoline
24.4	20.0
4.4	5.60
	Drums Distillate
	Gal. Oil
	Lbs. Grease
	No. 21
	Drums (Returnable)
	Received by

Bill for gasoline shows 24.4 cents per gallon including tax, 1943

in fuel oil – one single pump at premises situated on the NE ¼ sec 28-56-26-W4th". He purchased the car and tractor gas from North Star Oil.

Everything from jellybeans to mousetraps

The Sheehan girls remember the store as being a busy place. Country stores never closed. It was opened whenever a customer arrived, day or night,



Mearns General Store – Emile Norbert's store and house –circa 1934

DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIES AND LABOUR			
COPY		1275	
License			
YEAR	ISSUED AT EDMONTON, PROVINCE OF ALBERTA	AS AND FROM THE DATE HEREOF, UP TO AND INCLUDING	
1949-50	THIS 1st DAY OF April 1949	THE 31st DAY OF MARCH, 1950	
Daniel J. Sheehan (Mearns General Store)			
Mearns, Alberta			
IS HEREBY LICENSED AS:			
A Retail Dealer in Fuel Oil - One Single Pump at premises situated on the N.E. 1/4 Sec. 28-56-26-W. 4th M.			
An Operator of a General Store			
GOVERNMENT OF THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA			
THIS LICENSE IS NOT TRANSFERABLE		DEPUTY MINISTER OF INDUSTRIES AND LABOUR	
THIS LICENSE SHOULD BE POSTED IN A CONSPICUOUS PLACE.			
4th Star March 24	RECEIPT. NO.	LICENSE FEE	REFUND
COPY FOR	F.O.R. 294	1.00	1.00
FILING DEPT.	T.B.A. 330	2.00	2.00

and carried much more than groceries. Merchandise also included kerosene and coal oil, mousetraps, band aids, shotgun shells, fishing hooks, ribbon candy, jellybeans, postage stamps, motor oil, bins of apples and oranges, flour, sugar, McGavin's bread, canned tomatoes, mantles for lanterns, cigarettes, loose tobacco and papers, canned milk, mercurochrome, needles and thread, soaps, baloney, sardines, sanitary pads, fly swatters and fly stickers, work gloves, block cheese, slab bacon, vinegar in barrels, pencils, fountain pens and bottles of ink, creoline and lye to make soap. It also had an ice box with butter, bacon and meat. Hence the name 'general' store'!

On Sundays the village came alive. After Mass people stood around and visited. The store became a

very busy place, as parishioners would stop for a few groceries or a Sunday treat for the kids while they were in town. Every Saturday Dan Sheehan would go into Edmonton to Canada Packers and Scott National Fruit to get groceries. While the farm kids had their chores to do, the store owner's kids had work to do as well. Saturday afternoon would be spent stocking shelves. There were plank floors that had to be oiled and shelves and cans to be dusted. These stores were in operation before refrigerators and deep freezers so things like butter, meat and bacon were kept in an icehouse and later in an icebox behind the store. Large chunks of ice were chopped from Fraser Lake and loaded into the bottom of the icebox to keep things cool. Mearns General Store operated until 1961.



View of the Mearns church, rectory (to the right of the church), convent (to the left of the church), St. Charles elementary school (slightly behind and to the left of the convent), and the junior high school (to the far left) – circa late 1950's, early 1960's

The case of the 'hot' turkey

A lot of visiting was done in that store. When Mrs. Rottot would come for a few groceries Dan Sheehan would bring out the vinegar barrel and place it in front of the booker and Mrs. Rottot would make herself comfortable. From her spot she would point and others would pick and load her groceries. She would get one item, pay for it, then sit back down, visit a bit and then choose another item. Each item would be paid for individually. She and Dan both had a good sense of humor and shared a rapport. There's a story about a time around Christmas when she came to the store and mentioned that she had a turkey in the oven at home. She came by horse and cart and when she left, Dan and Don Chute jumped into the truck and headed to her house by the back road to beat her home. They then proceeded to steal the turkey from her oven. When she arrived home, she could smell the turkey but opened the oven to find it empty. It didn't take her long however, to see the footprints in the snow that led to the side of the house. It was there she found the fellas who had been watching her through the window... and holding the 'hot' turkey.

The Hutterites bought the land in 1976 and razed all the buildings. The only thing left standing to remind anyone that the store was ever there was the new, green, freestanding mailbox.

The honeymoon cottage

Back in the 1940s and 50s there was also a small house beside the Mearns General Store that was home to a few families over the years. It was like today's starter home because many newlyweds of the day spent their first year or so of married life there. The locals even referred to it as 'the

honeymoon cottage'. Don and Kay Chute, a nephew of Dan Sheehan's, lived there when they were first married, while Don was Postmaster. Bud and Helen McGillis, a brother of Catharine Sheehan, also lived there at the start of their marriage. As Pat Sheehan says in his story in this book, he brought his bride, Simonne, to live in Mearns. Simonne (Borle) Sheehan taught at St. Charles School and Pat operated a trucking business. Hugh and Agnes Kennedy lived there after Mr. Kennedy's retirement and before moving into Edmonton. Then it was George and Joyce Biddiscombe who came to stay awhile. The next occupants were Norbert and Elsie Leibel and their family. Norbert taught school in Mearns and then in Alcomdale. The last inhabitants were Tim and Adele (Ricard) Auger who spent a couple months in the 'cottage' at the start of their marriage.

The Rectory

Another building in the town was the rectory. It was originally built in 1902 and moved into Mearns, next to the new church, in 1930. It burned down in the fall of 1957 when the parish priest, Fr. Rijniers, was visiting his family in Holland. A new rectory was built and ready for occupancy by February 18, 1958. It served as housing for the priests until 1973 when the parish was amalgamated with four other surrounding parishes and the priest took up residence in Villeneuve. Fr. McGrane continued to live in the Mearns rectory as chaplain for the School Sisters of Notre Dame until his death in October of 1976. The rectory was rented out for several years then sold in December of 1993 to Dan Sheehan (son of Joe Sheehan). He in turn sold it to the present owner, Donna Garen, in September of 1998.



The former St. Charles Rectory as it appears today. It was built in 1958 and served as housing for the priests until 1973

St. Charles Catholic Church

From the time the first little mission church was begun until present day, parish life and sense of community and family has been the hub of life in Mearns, with the church being its center... (see story on St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church in this book).

The Convent

The convent, built in 1948/49 for the School Sisters of Notre Dame who came to Mearns to teach at the newly established St. Charles School, was officially opened September 28, 1949. It was a fine house and the landscaping and planting of trees done by the Sisters is appreciated to this day. On March 9, 1976, Sr. Carla Marie McCarville, Provincial Leader, informed Archbishop McNeil that as of June 1976 the Sisters found it necessary to withdraw from Mearns. Mark and Dawn Kirvan purchased the convent and still reside there with their family today (see their family story in this book). At the School Reunion in 2004, they kindly opened it for visitors. The School Sisters of Notre Dame who were back for the occasion were truly happy to revisit the place they called home while living in Mearns.

A piece of history moves to Mearns

Recently Dan Sheehan (son of Joe and Thelma Sheehan) purchased land in Mearns. He submitted the following story:

"In 2005 a very old, historical building was moved to the Mearns area and was renovated/restored to become the home of Dan Sheehan. The house belonged to Pete and Mary Sheehan and was moved from their quarter section of land, north down Range Road 263, and across the railroad tracks to Dan Sheehan's property.

This building was originally constructed as the second Roman Catholic Church, which served the communities of Riviere Qui Barre and Alexander First Nation. It was built in 1895 and, when a new



Built in 1895 for a church, it is now a home in Mearns



Dan Sheehan in front of his renovated/restored house in 2007

and larger church was built years later, Peter Sheehan bought the old church and moved it to his property. It was remodeled and served the Pete and Mary Sheehan family as their home for many years.

The house is one of the oldest buildings remaining in the area, and although some significant structural changes and additions were made to make the home comfortable, a lot of effort went into retaining or restoring as much as possible of the original house.

The house is now 112 years old and we hope it will stand in Mearns for many years to come".

A great place to grow up

An excerpt from Maureen Sheehan's story "As village kids we always had lots of playmates. A team sport meant absolutely everyone played. No one was excluded because we needed each other. The whole town, including the local dump, was our playground. Those train tracks were our gym equipment. Every one of us could walk those gigantic 'balance beams' with ease.

In the mid 1950s the population was approximately 40 people. At that time the majority of children were girls so there was a lot of time spent in the summer making hula skirts out of bulrush reeds and crowns out of woven dandelions. We picked bouquets of tiger lilies and Indian paintbrushes that grew alongside the railway tracks. Everyone joined in for the bike riding and evening

games of ball or kick-the-can and making hideouts. In the 60s the boys of Mearns took over. Activities for them included building tree houses and rafting in ditches and ponds, playing hockey on Fraser Lake, go-carting, gopher hunting, and jumping from the haylofts into snowdrifts.

One of the favorite social occasions in town was someone's birthday party. This was a tradition that



Everything was fun, even a trip to the dump. Lorraine Ricard driving, L to R: Janet Sheehan, Guy and Jimmy Ricard, Adele Ricard and Cathy Sheehan

was started by Barbara Pelletier. Everyone was invited for games and birthday cake. If you were lucky you might find a wrapped dime or nickel in your piece of cake. I don't remember presents but I do remember the fun of being together. Times were simpler then. A whole afternoon could be spent just placing a penny on the railway tracks then sitting waiting for the train to go by and squish it flat. It was a relaxed and great place to grow up.

Through the years a number of families have called Mearns 'home'. Though less populated, it remains a viable hamlet. The church is the focal point and is the heart of the town. As one approaches Mearns, the steeple of the St. Charles Church can be seen for miles and the sight brings to mind a sense of comfort. It welcomes us home!

Mearns Timeline

- 1800s Settlers arrive. A store or trading post was established at Egg Lake (where coal mine location is). A school was connected with post at that time.
- 1887 Fr. Quevillon said Mass and taught school at the trading post.
- 1892 Mearns established.
- 1899 Catholic people served by priest from Legal, Alberta.
- 1899 Oblate Fathers came from Lac La Nonne to serve Catholic people.

- 1902 Small Chapel and Catholic Rectory built near present graveyard site.
- 1912 Railroad station built.
- 1918 Large bronze bell blessed by Archbishop Legal as 'St.Charles'.
- 1921 Egg Lake Coal Mine opens for operation.
- 1925 Topper Grain Company builds first grain elevator.
- 1928 United Grain Growers build an elevator.
- 1928 Post Office established.
- 1928 Alberta Pacific Grain Company takes over Topper elevator.
- 1930 St. Charles Church built at present location, blessed by Bishop O'Leary on October 19 as St. Charles Borromeo.
- 1930 St. Charles Rectory moved to present site, Fr Stacey appointed first parish priest.
- 1930 St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church, a mission of St. Charles, was opened in Busby.
- 1934 Store established in Mearns.
- 1935 Fr. Stacey dies at age 38.
- 1948 St. Charles School begins in Mearns with centralization of the Egg Lake, Belle Valley and Tellier schools in Mearns.
- 1948 Belle Valley school building moved to Mearns.
- 1948 Convent built.
- 1950 Catholic Women's League formed under guidance of Fr. Merchant.
- 1957 Rectory burned down.
- 1958 New Rectory built and used as Rectory until 1976.
- 1961 Post Office and store closes down.
- 1966 United Grain Growers purchases Alberta Pacific elevator.
- 1968 St. Charles School closes.
- 1969 Mearns Community Association starts and buys school.
- 1969 Sisters of Notre Dame leave Mearns and convent is sold.
- 1979 Elevators sold and dismantled.
- 1980 St. Charles Catholic Church celebrates 50th Anniversary.
- 1992 St. Charles Borromeo Church declared a historical site.
- 1992 Rectory, previously rented out, was sold to Dan Sheehan.
- 1992 Mearns Seniors Club organized.
- 2000 St. Anthony's Catholic Church closes in Busby and joins St. Charles Parish.
- 2004 St. Charles School Reunion held on August long weekend.
- 2004 St. Charles Catholic Church celebrates 75th Anniversary.

NE 1/4 28 - 56 - 26 W of 4

A. St. Charles School Site
• Mearns Community Association

B. Convent-
School Sisters of Notre Dame
• Marthis & Robin Hittos
• Mark & Dawn Kirvan

C. St. Charles Roman Catholic Church

D. Catholic Rectory-
• Dan Sheehan
• Donna Garen

E. House by Store (Honeymoon House)
• Don Chute
• Bud & Helen McGillis
• Pat & Simonne Sheehan
• Hugh & Agnes Kennedy
• Geo & Joyce Biddiscombe
• Norbert & Elsie Liebel
• Tim & Adele Auger

F. Mearns General Store (Owners)
• Joseph Ricard
• Emile Nobert
• Joe & Annie Sagan
• Dan & Catharine Sheehan
(Bulk Dealer for Oil & Gas)

G. Store Owners House
• Emile Nobert
• Joe & Annie Sagan
• Dan & Catharine Sheehan
(Bulk Dealer for Oil & Gas)

H. U.G.G. Elevator Agent House
• L. Lamarr
• J.N. Ricard
• A.C. Milne
• B.P. McKinnon
• Doyle Cochlin
• Lou Letourneau
• Hugh Kennedy
• Ludick Banack
Sold to:
• Gordon & Pattie Worobec
• Bob & Sheila Bryon
• Steve & Lilian Tezner

I. Train Station

J. Alberta Pacific Grain
Owned by Federal Grain
Started as Topper Grain
Purchased by U.G.G.

K. United Grain Growers Elevator

L. Elevator Agent House for Pacific Grain
• Ike Houle
• Clem Lavallee
• Charles Pellitier
• Pat & Sophie Hittinger
• Colin Fraser

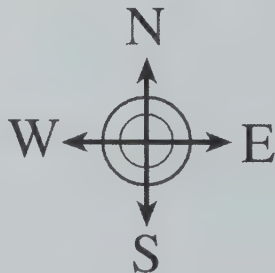
T. Ricard

T. Ricard

Jim Ricard

Paul & Wanda
Thompson

MAP OF MEARNS



Range Road 264

Range Road 263

Township Road 564

Education

Sturgeon School Division

By Janet (Nobert) Macdonald, taken from the Sturgeon S.D. website

When the Province of Alberta was founded within the Dominion of Canada in 1905 the system of education, which had been in force in the Northwest Territories, was continued. This was based on the small communities which were beginning to be formed and provided education up to grade eight.

In 1935 Alberta was more widely settled and with the rapid advancement of technology, there was a demand from industry and the public in general for higher education. The new Social Credit Government under the leadership of an ex-teacher, William Aberhart, had a heavy representation of teachers who had the foresight to see the needs of the future. Due to the poor financial state of many of the rural school districts following the depression of the 1930s, it was necessary for the Provincial Government to pass legislation in 1936 which provided for the establishment of school divisions.

The Sturgeon School Division, consisting of five sub-divisions, was formed by Ministerial Order on January 1, 1939, although the five Trustees were elected and sworn in at the first organization meeting held on December 6, 1938. They were:

- Sub-Division No. 1 Mr. J.G. Dusseault
- Sub-Division No. 2 Mr. Angus L. McGillis
- Sub-Division No. 3 Mr. Harry Speers
- Sub-Division No. 4 Mr. John E. Holmes
- Sub-Division No. 5 Mr. M.D. Tkachuk

Mr. Speers was appointed Chairman of the Board, Mr. J.E. Holmes, Vice-Chairman, Mr. E. Meaden was appointed Secretary-Treasurer and Mr. J.J. LeBlanc was the provincially-appointed Superintendent of Schools for the Division.

In July 1939 Mr. R.J. Scott was appointed Superintendent of Schools but Mr. LeBlanc returned to the position when Mr. Scott joined the Armed

Services late in 1942 and was replaced by Mr. E.M. Erickson who served the Division until Mr. Scott rejoined the staff after his discharge from the Army. On September 1, 1955 following Mr. Scott's retirement, Mr. J.F. Swan was appointed to the position. Mr. A.E. Kunst followed Mr. Swan in August 1964 and was succeeded as the first Board-appointed Superintendent by Mr. F.J. Robinson on October 1, 1970.

Following the untimely death of Mr. Robinson after 29 years of service with the Sturgeon School Division, Mr. W.J. Heppler was appointed to the position of Superintendent of Schools on December 5, 1979. In May 1985 Mr. A.J. Taylor was appointed Acting superintendent, and in April 1986 Mr. R.D. Thiessen was appointed to the position. Mr. John L. Hogarth was appointed Superintendent on March 31, 1994, upon the retirement of Mr. Thiessen in January 1994. On February 1, 1998, Mr. Ken Robertson was appointed to the position, followed by Mr. Evan Miller from November 15, 2000 until his retirement on July 31, 2007. Dr. Michele Dick is presently the Superintendent of Schools following her appointment on August 23, 2007.

Mr. E. Meaden retired from the position of Secretary-Treasurer in 1962 and was succeeded by Mr. Alphonse Nobert who held the position until 1965, at which time Mr. Charles Krauskopf was appointed. Mr. Krauskopf retired in 1984 and Mr. Murray Lloyd became Secretary-Treasurer. In August 1997, Mr. Andrew Isbister was appointed Secretary-Treasurer, followed by Ms. Marlene Pilsner and presently (2007) Ms. Karen Parasynchuk.

At the time of its inception, the Sturgeon School Division consisted mainly of one and two-room schools with a few larger schools near the more prosperous towns. Gradually the idea of centralizing the schools around major villages became popular, but this re-organization was interrupted by the start of World War II.

During this period, one of the alternatives to centralization was the formation of dormitories. One such dormitory was established in Bon Accord in 1943. When the War ended centralization resumed and the dormitories were closed by 1949.

Between January 1, 1947 and June 1, 1948 St. Albert School District No. 3 (RCP) and the Legal School District No. 1738 were included in the Sturgeon School Division, but in 1947 the Thorhild School Division No. 57 and the Westlock School Division No. 37 were formed which resulted in Sturgeon losing 30 sub-divisions to these new School Divisions.

When St. Albert became a town in 1957, the St. Albert School District was excluded from the Sturgeon School Division and in 1959 the people of the Amelia School District requested and were granted permission to become part of the County of Thorhild. In 1955, due to a re-organization of the boundaries of the municipalities and the school districts by the Provincial Co-Terminus Boundaries Commission in preparation for introduction of the County System in the Province, the Vimy School District was lost to Westlock.

When the County of Sturgeon was formed in January 1961, Sturgeon School Division ceased to exist and the County School committee assumed the responsibilities for the administration of education formerly handled by the Divisional Board. Pursuant to a plebiscite requested by the electors, the area reverted to Municipal District and School Division status on July 12, 1965.

By Ministerial Order dated October 13, 1966 the number of sub-divisions within the Sturgeon School Division was reduced from five to four, following the exclusion of the seven sub-divisions comprising the Legal centralization by public demand, thus reducing the Board membership to four Trustees.

On September 6, 1977 Sub-Division No.1 of the County of Thorhild was, following public petition, transferred to the Sturgeon School Division, increasing the number of Trustees to five and in October of that year, following some re-arrangement of the sub-divisions at the request of the Minister, seven Trustees were elected. This brought the community of Redwater into the Sturgeon School Division.

Since the re-formation of the Sturgeon School Division in 1965 numerous changes have taken place within the area. In the spring of 1989 the Board of Trustees, following the philosophy of the ward system, resolved to make electoral boundaries and attendance boundaries Co-Terminus wherever feasible.

In September 1966 some high schools within the Division were closed and students were sent to St. Albert and Edmonton to complete their education. By September 1970 all high school students were being educated in St. Albert and Edmonton. In 1977 the Division constructed its own Composite High School, which offers academic, vocational and technical programming.

Between 1969 and 1979 the following programs were set up under the auspices of the Director of Special Services:

1969 – Educably Mentally handicapped (EMH)

1973 – Resource room

1974 – Early Childhood Services (ECS)

1974 – Improvement Program (IP)

1978 – Special Help Program

1979 – Academic Occupational Program (AO)

In the fall of 1972 the Morinville Hutterite Colony School joined the Sturgeon School Division. In the years 1976 to 1979 an increase of students from 2,300 to 4,700 was experienced which resulted in an increase in professional and paraprofessional staff from 125 in 1976 to 255 in 1979. Since 1979 enrolments remain relatively stable at approximately 5,000 students. Unlike the majority of school divisions in Alberta, the Sturgeon School Division continued to experience an increase in the number of pupils in its schools.

During the 1981-82 school year Edmonton annexed a portion of the southeast corner of the M.D. of Sturgeon which included the Horse Hill School, transferring it to the Edmonton Public Schools in July 1982. This, coupled with a downturn in Alberta's economy, lowered the enrolments during 1983 to 1986.

In September 1994 Guthrie School at Lancaster Park, Canadian Forces Base Edmonton, became part of Sturgeon School Division as did Oak Hill School at Bon Accord in September 1995. Oak Hill School had previously been in Sturgeon School Division from 1979 to 1990.

In 1996 the Government of Alberta mandated the implementation of *school based decision-making (SBDM)*. This resulted in downsizing centralized services and decentralization of responsibilities to the school level under the direct responsibility and accountability of the principal, with the guidance of the school council. The impact on Sturgeon schools was positive bringing many of the decisions that directly affect the students closer to the schools through consultation with parents, staff, and students.

In the fall of 1996 the School Division launched Route #24 which introduced the Internet and a variety of related technology as a tool to enhance

student learning. In January 2000 the Division upgraded to a wireless network with the help of an Innovation Grant from Alberta Learning.

During the 1996-1997 school year the Board of Trustees conducted an Attendance Area Review. As a result, Landing Trail School became a kindergarten to grade four facility and Gibbons School became the grade five to grade nine facility servicing Wards 4 and 5.

In November 1995 the Division opened an alternative education program, the Sturgeon Learning Centre, to provide educational learning opportunities for senior high students and young adults. In July 1997 the program was expanded to include the Morinville Learning Center, which was developed in partnership with the Greater St. Albert Catholic Regional Division. Under the administration of the Sturgeon School Division, the programs in both Learning Centers have expanded to service students that require junior high school upgrading. In 1999 the Sturgeon Learning Center celebrated the graduation of its first group of students to successfully complete the Alberta Diploma requirements.

From 1996 to 1999 the role of community partnerships expanded and resulted in a partnership with the Edmonton Garrison, partnerships with other government agencies that created alternate programming for students with special needs, and an Education/Health partnership in the Lakeland region and a *Governance Agreement* partnership in the Aspen region that brought together school jurisdictions, the health authority, and the newly formed Child and Family Services authority.

Significant building projects during the latter half of the 1990s included the modernization of Bon Accord School in 1998 and the building of the Morinville Colony School in 1999. In the spring of 2000 Alberta Infrastructure granted a major modernization of Guthrie School in Lancaster Park, Edmonton Garrison. Also, a number of significant upgrades related to Career and Technology Studies were made in the Gibbons, Redwater, Sturgeon Composite High and Camilla schools.

According to the annual report of 2005-2006, the Sturgeon School Division extends from St. Albert and Edmonton in the south to Westlock and Thorhild in the north, and from the North Saskatchewan River in the east to Lac Ste. Anne in the west. There are 11 regular schools in the division, ranging in size from 250 to 1,000 students plus schools at the Morinville Hutterite Colony and at the Oak Hill Boys' Ranch. The Division also operates outreach schools at the Sturgeon Learning Centre in Gibbons, the Morinville Learning Centre

and the Redwater Learning Centre. Total enrollment on September 30, 2005 was 4,627 students, 958 of which attended Sturgeon Composite High School.

Alcomdale and Area Schools

Source: Decades of the Independence District (1981)

Bamill School

The first meeting of the Bamill School district was held on August 2, 1918. Mr. J. W. Dunham chaired this meeting and W. B. Mills recorded the minutes. The boundaries and name of the proposed district was decided upon and a petition for the formation of a district was signed. The boundaries were finally approved by the Department of Education. The Flu epidemic prevented holding any public meetings for several weeks and the first school meeting was held on November 25th with all the preliminary requirements being complied with. At this meeting J. Dunham was elected chairman, W. Mills as secretary and J. Dunham, Charles Bailey and W. Mills were elected as trustees for the coming year.

In January of 1919 a school site was chosen. It was two acres on the SE corner of 27-56-27-W4. The site was formally approved by the Minister of Education in April of 1919. After many letters and meetings, a school was built with a cement foundation. On January 12, 1920 Bamill School was opened. A recollection is that Mr. Dunham gave the school its name because he had a friend in England with the same name. There is also the suggestion that it stands for three neighbors; Bacon, Bailey and Mills.

In October of 1920 the school opened for its second term with Miss Olive McKittrick as teacher. She received a salary of eleven hundred dollars. Miss Hallie Taylor taught for the next two years.

The Board was kept busy. The winter wood supply was tendered: so many cords of green and so many cords of dry. This was hauled to the schoolyard in trimmed tree lengths, sawed, split and piled there. The jobs of sweeping the school, starting the fire and carrying the drinking water were let out to the pupils annually.

It is interesting to note that in the 1920s the teacher's salaries were one thousand to eleven hundred dollars per year, while in the thirties, the salary dropped to a low of seven hundred dollars.

The recesses and noon hours at school were all too short. The pupils played games that everyone could take part in, summer and winter. There was always the annual concert, the annual picnic and the annual visit from the Inspector. For many years Bamill had the visits of Mr. J. J. LeBlanc.

More teachers' names are: Mildred Bacon, 1923-24; W. F. Hargrove, 1924-25; Murray Skinner, 1925-26; Harold Newman, 1927-28 and Madeline Haynes, 1928-29. Mrs. A. Ellett taught from the spring of 1929 plus the next two terms. These teachers followed; Ross Bacon, 1931-33; Mary Moran, 1933-34; Bessie Crone, 1934-35; Richard Morton, 1935-37; Helen McLaughlin, Sid Dineen, 1937-38; Kay Conner, 1938-39 and Bernice Johnstone, 1939-40. A Mr. MacDonald taught for a while and the names of Miss Webb, Miss Hanson and Mrs. Warren Fulton followed. Not entered in the records, but from recollections, a Mr. Driscoll, Mr. Forbes and a Mr. Bullock also taught short terms at Bamill.

Some interesting items from the minutes of the Bamill School:

Jan. 5, 1920, 10 cords of wood at \$3.50 a cord; the same year it was decided to pay the teacher \$2 per month for sweeping and dusting the school; assessment on land Sept. 19, 1919 was \$.08 per acre, this went up to 18¢ per acre April 12, 1920; in June 1925 it was decided to build a fence and Mr. Fulton offered 150 posts at 7¢ a piece; in 1930 Mr. Ducharme was engaged to paint the building at 50¢ per hour; February discussion was on repairs and cleaning of fountain, with a decision to scald it weekly; coal oil and mouse traps to be bought; June of the same year was a real field day; the school to be cleaned, stove pipes polished, floors scrubbed and oiled, walls kalsomined, and tenders for outhouses were given out. Cost of cleaning the school as above with other items not included in this list, \$6.00!

Things were so bad in June 1933 that the teacher was paid \$53 and asked to wait for the balance of \$200 until such time as the board could pay. In 1936 Mr. Arlow was voted \$1 for expense money for a trip to Edmonton. The school building was painted that year, when Gerald Mitchell did the job for \$25.

In 1947 at a ratepayers meeting, it was voted one hundred percent in favor of uniting the Bamill School District with that of Alcomdale. The school building was to be moved into town for the accommodation of Bamill pupils. Vans were to transport the children to Alcomdale.

As the consolidated school included several districts, the school board elected was made up of a representative from each district. A Home and School organization came out of this consolidation of schools. A Student's Union was formed in the senior grades.

A high school was built in Riviere Qui Barre and gradually the Alcomdale grades decreased until in 1968, it was a majority vote to close the present

school and have the students absorbed into Camilla School at Riviere Qui Barre.

Independence School

March 24, 1902 – The Independence School District No. 683 was established and on April 9, 1903 the Independence School District No. 683 borrowed the sum of \$500.00, upon the security of the District, for the purpose of building and equipping a schoolhouse. The Treasurer at the time was P.B. Sawyer of Riviere Qui Barre, Alberta.

The Independence School was built in 1903 on land donated by Michael Collins. One acre was to be used as school property only. The logs were donated by a nearby farm and all volunteer labor built the school. It opened in 1903 with Miss Kate Timney as the first teacher. In 1904 these were the names of some of the pupils: William Elliot, Eddie Pickering, Billy Waage, Harry Smith, and Bessie Hough.

Recollections are dim of the early years of this school. When Miss McKittrick was teaching she remembers Pete Kenon, who possibly acted as caretaker, presenting her with a lovely bouquet of 'Sveet Villiums' picked fresh from his garden.

The school was once in the Hazelwood Municipality, later changing to Westlock and Sturgeon, probably changing its boundaries too. Independence School was consolidated in the 1940's along with so many of the rural schools. Some of the families attended Busby School and others were transferred to Alcomdale. Many of the early teachers stayed only a few months before terminating due to personal reasons.

- In the early 1930's when Miss Laura Taylor was teacher, the school stamp was still the original North West Territories and the school license was yet a small number.
- January 3, 1939 – The Independence School District No. 683 was constituted into the Sturgeon School Division No. 24 and into Subdivision No. 2. Mr. Ernest Meaden of Edmonton, Alberta was the Secretary of the Division at the time.
- October 17, 1947 – The Independence School District No. 683 was re-subdivided into Subdivision No. 1 of the Sturgeon School Division No. 24.
- January 1, 1948 – The Independence School District No. 683 was transferred from the Sturgeon School Division No. 24 to the Westlock School Division No. 37.
- January 2, 1948 – The Independence School District No. 683 was re-subdivided into Subdivision No. 5 of the Westlock School Division No. 37.

- April 12, 1949 – Since the Independence School District No. 683 was centralized at Busby on September 1948 approval was given for the sale of the buildings and site.
- November 28, 1966 – Approval was given for the sale of the site and buildings located on the SE ¼ of 9-57-27-W4th, bordering the remainder of the quarter section owned by William Hartum. The Independence School building is now used as a barn on the W. Hartum farm. Since then the farm was sold to Len and Ann Caplin and most recently sold to Mike and Tracy Owens.

Independence School #683 – Teacher List

1903	Miss Kate Timney
1915	Miss Ida Davidson
1916	Miss Eva McKittrick
1919	Edith Leverton
	Alice Howe (6 months)
	Donald McLeod (1 month)
	Mrs. Martha Baird
1920	Mr. Martin Luther Hoffman
	Mrs. Martha Baird
	Mrs. Orpha Fulton
1921	Mrs. Orpha Fulton
1922	Mrs. Orpha Fulton
	Mrs. Martha Baird
1923-24	Mr. George Dewey Spargo
1924	Dorothy (Allyn) Spargo
1925	Belle Snider – resigned
	Jean Gordon – resigned
1926	Laurence Peacock
1926-29	Miss Nina Bell
1929-30	Miss Mary P. Howard
1930-32	Adele Irving
1932-37	Miss Nina Bell
1937-42	Miss Laura Taylor
1942-49	Mrs. A. O'Brien-Smith
1949	School consolidation with the students being divided between Busby and Alcomdale Schools.

Later students in the Sturgeon division attended Riviere Qui Barre, St. Albert and then Sturgeon Composite High School at Namao. Students in the Westlock division then attended Busby and later Westlock for their high school years.

Independence School

by Nina (Bell) Alstrom

I have many recollections of my first years at Independence. I went there in 1926, which is many years back and I stayed there for three years. I believe I followed Dorothy (Allyn) Spargo and Adele Irving and Miss Howard could have followed

me. I boarded with Helen and Fred Gore who were living on what later became the O'Brien-Smith farm. They were very nice people and I enjoyed living in their home. The school attendance was small. As I can remember, the pupils were Desmond and Kenneth Sutton, Carrie, June and Eugene Waage, Violet Jackson, Amy and Lyall Norman, and Billie Louchy. The school was a far cry from the modern ones and the library was practically nothing but we made out. The children learned and I found the parents and children very co-operative.

I enjoyed being in the community. Everyone gave me the feeling that they were glad to have me. I went back again in the early 1930's. This time there were a few more pupils. The three Baileys had started – Delmar, Ella and Mildred, three more Louch children, Lola and Audrey Collins, Freddie Aust and others. At this time Ross Bacon was teaching at the Bamill School and we started a correspondence club between our pupils. This did help with their language, spelling and penmanship. Perhaps now this wouldn't be important but it was good then for the schools.

All told, I was nine years in Independence and it became a second home to me. Everyone was kind and I had some very nice visits in their homes. I stayed with Arthur and Agnes Bailey and family for a length of time and they became my second parents.

Early Impressions of Independence

By Dorothy (Allyn) Spargo

As I traveled north on the N.A.R. from Edmonton, it was pleasant to chat with some of my classmates bound for schools in the neighboring districts. I was to go to Independence School.

When I waved goodbye to my friends at the station, I felt pretty small and lonesome. A man stepped up and asked me if he could carry my suitcase. Being wary of strangers, I said, "I can manage it, thank you" as I struggled on towards Lovelock's store. The man was Paul Spargo.

The first time I saw Alcomdale, it seemed like a pioneer country. The road was narrow, like driving through a dark green tunnel. Later I learned about mud in summer and snow in winter. Nothing kept people at home if they wanted to go somewhere.

Kind, friendly people greeted me at the "little brown church in the wildwood." That lovely old hymn makes me think of Independence church as I saw it then. Each Sunday through sunshine or rain, Preacher Kelly gave his flock spiritual uplift.

The Independence School was a typical rural place of learning. There was one room with a box

stove in the centre. All double seats were clustered around it. A pail of water with a family dipper for the use of the pupils was a necessary piece of equipment. The children proved to be industrious. Some of the lively ones performed the usual schoolboy pranks. There were twenty pupils in eight grades.

When Christmas time came, we all went to the Busby Hall to practice for the annual concert. An older boy, not in school, drove us there with horses and sleigh. It was a cold day so when no warm fire greeted us in the hall, we started one ourselves. To hurry it up, this chap poured what he thought was coal oil on the wood. It must have been gasoline for as we grouped around the stove, warming our hands and toes, the door blew open with a loud bang. The smallest girl was right in front getting the full blast. There were some blisters on her hands. I was so thankful that the hall and all weren't blown up. Some salve from the nearby store served as first aid.

That was the year Independence Hall was built. The thing I remember about my first visit there is the caterpillars. They were everywhere, outside, inside and falling from the trees. One could scarcely put a foot down without stepping on them.

Women's Institute meetings were great events. For a January meeting, Mrs. Fulton went to a lot of trouble to get lettuce for sandwiches. She must have felt rewarded, for the ladies raved about them.

Although we were far away from the city in those days, there was plenty of entertainment. One event was a house warming in the Ellett brothers' new house before the partitions were put in. All the neighbors came to visit and dance. The gay toe tapping music came from a mouth organ.

Independence Memories and Short Recollections

By Rosalie (Collins) Slee

Miss Kate Timney was the first teacher at Independence School. She began teaching in September 1902. Martha Collins was her sister. Kate boarded at Collins and let school out at noon one day to drive with Martha and Mrs. S. to Riviere Qui Barre in a bobsleigh. The destination was not met, as a baby (Willis) was born on the way, at the Whitson farm, March 4, 1904. They were taken back to Mrs. Dunham's where they stayed until they were able to go on to Timney's.

While on the farm we got our mail at Busby and also in Alcomdale. We shared a mailbox with A.D. O'Brien-Smiths for 10 years before we moved to Alcomdale.

Jerry Smith's place was three miles west and three miles south of Busby. There was no open road

built there then, so we used to go two miles west of Busby and three miles south, and cross Collins field west, until the road was made. He sold his farm to Billy Young and they moved into Busby where they built a large house. Ed and Mrs. J. Smith lived there many years until Harry and Carry and family acquired it. Harry built a large garage and eventually moved to Edmonton.

Memories of School in Independence and Busby

By Pat Meakin (Thompson)

Going to school in the spring meant going in the wagon over the flooded roads. We walked one and a half miles to Independence School. Our teacher was Mrs. O'Brien-Smith. Then we went to Busby and rode on a homemade school bus. When the weather was wet or snowy we had to walk two miles to the bus. There was no gravel on the roads in those days. The teachers at Busby were Mrs. Anderson, Mr. Ken Nixon and Mrs. Hunter. For high school we were bussed to Westlock. It seemed like a long rough road, all gravel, in those days.

New England/Alcomdale School History

By Gail Nordstrom

Sources used: "Celebration – A History of the School Districts and Schools of the Sturgeon School Division #24, 1939-1989" and "Decades of the Independence District"

According to the historical records of Sturgeon School Division #24, Alcomdale School District #1888 was officially established in 1950, which was just a name change from the previous New England School District #1888 established in October 1908. Money was borrowed at that time to build and equip a school situated at SE¼ 6-57-26-W4 (just across from the road where the Hutterite Brethren buildings are now). The first teacher was A.M. MacIlvaney.

The senior trustee at that time was J.P. Summer of Independence and the treasurer of the District was Thomas J. Dwyer of Egg Lake. Other noted teachers at that time were Mary (Fitzgerald) Ogle, Dewey Spargo, Mrs. P. Heath and in 1922-23, Miss Bowen. The earliest school register in New England School was dated 1923-24 with Mr. D. Pegrum as teacher in July and August and Mr. Carver in October. In the fall of 1926, Mr. Jasper Ruston taught, replaced in December by T.J. Harrington.

The school was closed for a week in March 1927 because of vaccination for smallpox. That same year 36 pupils were enrolled and a teacher was paid \$700 per year. Enrollment in 1928 numbered

43 and only 29 in 1929. J.J. LeBlanc was the Inspector for many years.

Between 1928 and 1930 a total of \$4,000 was borrowed upon the security of the district for the purpose of building and equipping a new one-room school within the town of Alcomdale, a barn for the horses which brought the children to school, and putting up a fence around the school grounds. The new school was opened in 1930, complete with something quite exceptional for the area at that time, indoor toilets in the basement. The treasurer at that time was T.J. Lovelock of Alcomdale.

On January 3, 1939 the New England School District was constituted into the Sturgeon School Division #24. An additional room was added to the



Alcomdale School with one room 1930

front of the school in 1947-48 and another wing was added to the back in 1952-53. In 1947 pupils from surrounding school districts of Independence, Bamill, and Kingsley were incorporated into New



Second Room Built App

Alcomdale School second room built approx 1948-1949. Construction headed up by Mr. Rautio



Alcomdale School on July 1, 1958 with the former Bamill School behind used as a portable school. Jr. High wing built on the back of the school approx 1952-1953



New England School, Alcomdale 1947-1948

Back row: Robert Hodgins, Grace Libke, Margaret Mollenkopf, Allister Sim, Walter Mollenkopf, Toby Olacka, Hilda Janke, Ida Van Hove, Lillian Meyers, Lucille Harrington, Allouise Turcott. Middle row: Eugene Harrington, Shirley Moore, Ivy Libke, Mildred Moore, Ada Moore, Stella Jaworski, unknown, George Van Hove, Ewalt Janke; Front Row: unknown, Joyce Moore, Patsy Whitson, Hedy Mollenkopf, Florence Mills, Pauline Lalonde, Marie Van Hove, Henry Warunki

England School. Bamill School was moved behind Alcomdale School for accommodation of Bamill pupils (later becoming a portable school). Students were also bussed from outlying areas in vans and busses owned and operated by Alan Mills of Alcomdale. As the consolidated school included several districts, the school board elected was made up of a representative from each district. A Home and School organization was formed and also a Student's Union was formed in the senior grades.

In 1948 St. Charles School was established in the hamlet of Mearns, five miles to the southeast of Alcomdale. Many of the Catholic students and other students closer to Mearns relocated to St. Charles.

Until 1955 Alcomdale School accommodated all grades from 1-12, but that year all high school students were bussed to Camilla School situated at Riviere Qui Barre. Finally, in 1968, dwindling enrollments and the need for newer and better facilities forced the closure of Alcomdale School with all students being bussed to Camilla School. The Alcomdale School buildings and property were sold to Mark Kinsella who used them for his honey production business for many years. In 2003, Chris & Arlene Hancock purchased the property and were in the process of refurbishing the historic buildings when they caught fire on May 2, 2004 and burned to the ground.

Teachers at New England/Alcomdale School from 1931-1968

1931	T.J. Harrington
1932-34	Olive M. Little
1935-41	S. Carver
1942	H. Herd

1943-44	Theresa G. Scragg
1945	E. Rasmussen
1946-47	Helen Klapouschak
1947	Pauline Klapouschak
1948	Vera Walters/Barbara Dickson
1948-51	Donald K. Murray
1949-52	William Shewchuk
1950	G.R. Sweheim
1951-56	John A.H. Morris
1951-53	Winnifred Bradbury
1952-53	Eileen Greenway
1953-54	G. Yakemchuk and Betty R. Ellett
1953-54 &	
1965-66	Dorothy Spargo
1954-55	Robert Forbes
1955-57	Elizabeth Zylstra
1955-56	J. Van Riper
1956	Joseph Stevenson and Donna Edwards
1957-58	Olga Melnychuk, Marcella Rawluk and Virginia Zaharichuk
1958	Arthur J. Perrott and Jules Zilinski
1959-61 &	
1965-66	Ernest Smith
1959-60	Anthony Taylor
1960-61	Viola Good and Joyce Mattson
1961-62	C.A. Massie
1962-63	Sharon Davies
1962-64	Joan Plumtree
1962-63	Donald Cyr
1963-64	A Schlotter
1963-65	Norbert M. Liebel and Bert Tutschek
1965-66	Jeet Khullar and Pritam Khullar
1965-68	Mable Gravel
1966-68	Gwen Hughes
1967-68	J Hughes



Alcomdale School, Grades 9, 10 & 11 – circa 1947



Alcomdale School June 1963. Terry Whitson far right on stairs



Alcomdale High School – circa 1953. Back row: Teacher – John A. H. Morris – Richard Friedrich, Ken Middlebrough, Fred Kennett, Ray Schurman, Ivy Libke, Vivian Cantrol, Maxine Benson. Sitting: Merle Lorenz, Henry Warunki, Hedy Mollenkopf, Marion Mills, Stuart Meakin



Alcomdale School photo, date unknown



Alcomdale School photo, date unknown



Alcomdale School 1964-65 – Grades 3-4 – Teacher, Mrs. Kuller. Back row: Mrs. Kuller, Anne Arlow, Janice Meakin, Betty Spargo. Middle row: Lester Cox, Brenda Tomten, Colleen Harkin, Zofi Borowiecki, Lubie Kostiw, Gordon Byer, Gerald Seib, Gordon Scott. Front row: Gary Trelenberg, Blake Benson, Terry Whitson, John Domino, Ted Slecza, Lorry Cox, Alan Davidson



Alcomdale Teachers 1964-1965. Norbert Leibel, Adeline Schlotter, Joan Plumtree, Bert Tutschek



Alcomdale School – Norbert Leibel's 1964-1965 class



Alcomdale School last day of school, June 1958. Back row: Bill Gonek, Bill Byer, Douglas Cameron, Brian Whitson; Middle row: Marilyn Whitson, Mortie Cox. Sitting: Ethelyn Waege, Helene Lovelock, Margaret Benson. Bill, Bill and Douglas must have been finishing Student Union business and the rest are some of Mrs. Rawluk's class who must have been doing important work for her. Everyone else is out on a year-end picnic. The 7's and 8's were dismissed some days earlier to allow for the Grade 9 Departmental Examinations

New England/Alcomdale School

By Ida Vezina (Van Hove)

I attended New England school from grade one to grade nine. My grade one teacher was a Mr. Carver and my grade nine teacher was a Miss Rasmussen. I would like to tell about a couple incidents in our school travels. In the 1940s most of

the children traveled with horses or walked to school. In winter, they used some type of sleigh and in summer, it was buggies or carts.

One frosty winter morning in the 1940s, my Uncle Alphonse, George and I started off to school with our horse and cutter sleigh made from an old car body. We met the Ricard kids from Mearns at the corner, one mile east of Alcomdale with their team of horses and a caboose, so we followed them. As we were entering town, a train was coming in the distance. After we crossed the tracks, the whistle blew. Well, the horses took off. The Ricards steered their horses straight toward the Libke store corner but our horse turned at the Lovelock store corner so we went flying and the cutter upset. The shafts broke away from the cutter, stayed in the harness and the horse ran straight to the school barn. Some of the older kids came looking for us, and thankfully no one was hurt.

A few years later on a summer afternoon as we were leaving the schoolyard to go home with our horse and two-wheeled cart, a few kids jumped in it. Just as we were entering a little dip in front of the school to get on to the road, one of the wheels smashed. We unhooked the horse from the cart and had to ride it home, the three of us, George, Marie and I. The poor horse! Dad had to take the team and buggy with a spare wheel to tow the cart home. Those were good old days. We had fun.

Alcomdale Heritage Homecoming and School Reunion, 2005

On July 31-August 1, 2005 Alcomdale hosted "Alcomdale Heritage Homecoming and School Reunion" with over 600 invitations extended to former town and school residents. A large display of school and town archives was set up in the Alcomdale Community Hall to be enjoyed by the over 350 people attending the event.

Alcomdale School Buses

By Florence Mills

I remember my dad, Alan Mills, working long hours to build a school bus. I believe this was in 1947. I think I was in grade two at the time. He started with a truck body and built the structure around it. It was built to bring the children who had attended Bamill and Kingsley Schools into Alcomdale. The area covered was four miles west of Alcomdale, two miles south and four miles east and then the two miles north into Alcomdale. The Kingsley School district was west of Alcomdale, beyond the Bamill route. Later, an actual school bus was purchased by Alan Mills and the home made

bus was retired. In 1956 Alan Mills provided another bus to transport high school students who had previously attended Alcomdale and Mearns schools to Riviere Qui Barre. At this time and until the late 1960's Alan Mills had three buses operating in the area.

Mearns and Area Schools

A Glimpse of the Schools in the Region Over the Years

- **The Egg Lake School District** was established August 18, 1896. The first school was built in the Egg Lake area. In 1939 this district became part of the Sturgeon School Division. It closed in 1949.
- **Tellier School District** was established April 26, 1906. It joined the Sturgeon School Division in 1939 and closed in 1948.
- **L'Abbe School District** was established June 25, 1908. It became part of the Sturgeon School Division in 1939 and closed in 1949.
- **Belle Valley School District** was established in 1901. It became part of Sturgeon School Division in 1939. It closed in 1948 and became part of the St. Charles School.
- **St. Charles School** opened in August of 1948 and closed in 1968. The students were sent to Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre.

Schools of Yesteryear

By Justine (Hittinger) Hergott

In 1922 when I started school, all desks were double in sizes small, medium and large. Under each desk just above the knees, was a shelf to hold books. On either end of the desk was an inkwell with a lid, and a groove on each side to hold pens and pencils. There was a blackboard with chalk and



Typical classroom with double desks and bookcase for heating

brushes, a small library, a couple of roll-up maps and the teacher's desk that held the strap to be used on the disobedient! I think most teachers never used it, others sparingly, and a few mercilessly! In one corner was a furnace with a metal hood around it. A clock hung on the wall.

Grade one students had special manuscript ruled scribblers with five lines about $\frac{1}{4}$ inches apart, forming four spaces. This was to help learn about letters that sat on the line, letters that started above the line and letters that extended below the line. In grade three we had writing booklets to follow from, showing the correct formation of each letter, and exercises such as making even circles along two lines without lifting the pen we did in our own ink scribblers. This was to promote freehand writing. We did this with a straight pen with a nib. It seemed an impossible task and was very frustrating for me, as the nib would get caught in the paper and produce blots! These exercises were done, I think, through grade six, and afterwards got easier and easier. We had to write with a straight pen, as it was against the rule to use a fountain pen, and of course this was before ballpoint pens came into existence. We had spelling up to grade eight, and grammar from grade four on. The government supplied our readers but our parents bought the other texts and supplies.

In grade three we had to learn all the multiplication tables up to 12 and learned short division; in grade four we took long division and worked simple problems. Grade eight had square roots solved by students. Other courses were history and geography, which were studied as early as grade four. Of course, English was taught in every grade. The high school subjects were English, History, Geography, a foreign language, Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry and Analytical Geometry. We also learned Logarithms, which is a system of tables based on ten.

Each district school had a horse barn, and on either side an outside toilet – one for the boys and one for the girls. They were pretty crude buildings with only a twine between two nails to hold the door shut. If the twine got broken, and no friend was available to hold the door shut, you were in trouble! I can't say that I recall having toilet paper at our disposal.

When I started teaching in 1936, curriculum and conditions were much the same. I had 33 pupils from grades one to nine inclusive, with French and religion to teach as well; quite a load for a rookie! That was the first year grade one students learned to print instead of write. Only in grade three was writing introduced, and the manuscript-lined scribblers were done away with. Exercises to

promote freehand writing were no more. We had a new course, Social Studies, (instead of History and Geography) taught from grade four up.

There was no electricity in the rural schools in those days. The teacher wrote all tests on the blackboard. The only alternative was to use a hectograph, which the teacher made, and this could be used many times. It was composed of gelatin and glycerin (1 ounce of gelatin to 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces glycerin). This was heated over salt water until thoroughly melted, then poured into a long shallow pan, and left to harden. The material to be copied was written or drawn with a special copying ink and placed face down on this hardened pad then pressed slightly for a short while until the imprint of the writing was on the pad. About 100 copies could be made by placing blank papers over the pad and gently rubbing. This pad couldn't be used again for several days, as the former printing would show up on the new work. I had 2 hectographs; can you imagine the slow procedure?

Usually the stove was lit only a short while before school began so it was very cold in class on some days in winter, especially when the mercury dipped to -40° or more. The chalk would freeze to the blackboard and couldn't be erased until the room warmed up. At least the first hour on those frigid days would be mighty cold! Parents dressed their children warmly; moccasins and felt shoes were common. Some had home-knitted stockings or socks, sweaters and scarves, often worn in many layers.

We had to rely on the sun for light; school was from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. with 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -hours for lunch and two recesses. Because of the shorter days from November 15 to March 15, classes were held from 9:30 to 3:30 with 1 hour for lunch and two 10-minute recesses.

There was no quibbling about class sizes, you taught all the students that came. One teacher told me she had 55 pupils! There were no teacher aides in those days, however sometimes an older student would help out in the elementary grades.

When I taught at Tellier School in 1938-1939, the big divisions were formed, taking effect in January 1939. There was no immediate difference, except that the teachers were paid by the government instead of by the local districts. This was in the hungry thirties, and some teachers weren't paid up to date, so the big divisions assumed the responsibility to pay the deficits. The Tellier School was in the Surgeon Division. In September 1939, trucks delivered to the schools pencils, scribblers, erasers, pen nibs, etc. which the teachers sold to the students at wholesale prices. I remember



Justine Hittinger and her caboose pulled by horse "Dick" to Tellier School in 1939

selling 2 pen nibs for 1 cent, erasers for 2 cents, pencils for 3 cents, and so forth. Paper products such as towels and toilet tissue were supplied but not sold.

I traveled to school in the winter with my pony, Dick, pulling the caboose that my brother Tony made for me. At Belle Valley, I had my teacherage on wheels. My first year there, I had grades one to eight, while Miss Bernice Johnson taught grades nine to twelve. Bernice stayed with me, and so now my Aunt Clara Ecker was housekeeper for two teachers, which meant another piece of furniture – a cot! Weren't we lucky to have Aunt Clara! My aunt stayed with me for seven years in the teacherage.



Justine and Alice Hittinger, both teachers at Belle Valley School, 1943

The next two years at Belle Valley I taught grades seven to eleven, while my sister Miss Alice Hittinger had grades one to six. As she owned a piano, we had it in the school. It was placed in my room, since there was more space for it. What a treat to have a piano! And now I had my sister to help with the music. Music at Belle Valley was one great chorus of both rooms, and how the whole class loved singing. For the Christmas Concerts, we had songs in three-part harmony – all the students were so enthusiastic! We had selections too, in which the pupils played their tonettes. These were instruments that had a range of only 8 notes, but pieces like "Au Clair de la Lune", "The Tulip Song", and "Dona Nobis Pacem" could be done in harmony.



Louise and Jim Ellett play in the snow following the big blizzard Nov 15, 1942

In 1942 we had a really bad blizzard on Sunday, November 15. It would be impossible to get to school (9½ miles) on Monday by car, so my brother Michael hitched a team of horses to the big caboose. Inside was a little stove, with quite a lot of kindling, and a couple benches for the driver Michael, Aunt Clara, Bernice Johnson and myself. The first one and a half miles north were tough sleighing but it was so much worse when we turned west! We left home at 7:30 a.m. and only reached our destination at 3:30 p.m. There was no chance of seeing fence posts, because of the amount of snow. In fact, at one point when we were passing Joe



Gordon McGillis, Miss Hittinger and Joyce Whitson enjoying "the big snow".

Tellier's farm, the snow was as deep as the telephone poles! Mike got out several times to shovel out the horses which were holding their heads high in order to breathe. By this time the horses were played out. I think we were about an hour trying to pass Joe Tellier's place. Joe came out on horseback to blaze trail for our team. When we got to school, Gordon McGillis and Robert Morrison were shoveling snow, and the banks were higher than the school. All schools were closed for two days, even in Edmonton.

That night Mike stayed at Joe Tellier's and the next day he took a different route home – the Riviere Qui Barre road and it was much better. A picture is shown of Louise and Jim Ellett playing in the snow on their farm. I have another showing them in a boat that Jim made, in the lake of water left the next spring when the snow melted.



Jim and Louise Ellett in homemade boat in the spring of 1943

In 1943 when I taught grades seven to eleven at Belle Valley, there was a small lab, a somewhat better library (I let my class use my set of encyclopedias and other reference books), a wooden compass and protractor for the green slate board, a globe, and of course, a yardstick. That was pretty well the only equipment supplied. Each student had a single desk, where the hinged top would open to store books. The trick was to see that everything needed for the course was on hand before the class began. The course of studies said that the different subjects each required a prescribed number of hours of class time per week.

In those days some walked to school, others rode horseback, but as there were eight Brenneis students, in winter they had a team of horses and a sleigh, and would pick up others along the way. There is a picture of the horses at Belle Valley – I don't know how they could all fit into the school barn! That winter there was a particularly long cold spell of temperatures forty below or more! One morning I didn't hear the temperature on the radio, so I asked Maurice Brenneis how cold it was. He



How students traveled to Belle Valley School in 1942-43

answered, in all sincerity, "Oh, it's not bad today, it's only thirty below!"

In 1943, during World War II, the weather was really bad and harvesting was delayed for so long; farmers couldn't get help and the days were getting shorter. In the morning it was too damp to harvest, so they worked later in the evenings. Because the high school children could help harvest, school started at 10:11 a.m. and ended at 4:30 p.m. The clock was put on fast time for a while, something so different, as we were always on standard time in those days.

I had taken a time picture of my Belle Valley class, grades one to eight. The girls in front are Sabina and Anne Wills, behind them are Jackie Stevens and John Polakovitz, and behind them are Mildred Ellett and Leo Falls. I can't identify them all, but the two girls in the far left front row are Mavis Gill and Violet Brenneis. Raymond Como is just to the right of the stovepipe. Because there was no electricity for lights, and before flash bulb cameras were used, to take a time picture inside a room, there was a gadget to open the lens to let light in; after opening the lens, everyone had to be perfectly still from 30 to 60 seconds until I'd close the lens. This procedure let enough light in on the object. I have also enclosed a time picture taken in my teacherage of Miss Bernice Johnson, now Mrs. Percy Empey.



Justine's "time picture" of her Belle Valley class

I drove a seven horsepower Austin car. It held five imperial gallons of gas. It was the only car that could be used in winter on unplowed roads, as it followed sleigh tracks. If it slid off the sleigh track, they would stop immediately and lift the front or



Bernice Johnson taken in Miss Hittinger's teacherage – circa 1942



Justine Hittinger's Aunt (Clara Ecker) in the Austin 7 that Miss Hittinger drove while teaching at Belle Valley in 1942-43

back onto the track again. No shoveling! However, we did spend some weekends at the teacherage.

In 1948-1949 Father Merchant was able to have a Catholic school in Mearns by getting three nuns from the School Sisters of Notre Dame order. Sister Henrita taught grades one to four and Sister Mary Edward had grades five to eight. Both taught in the one room Egg Lake School until the Belle Valley School was moved into Mearns. In September 1949 the L'Abbé School was hauled into Mearns and I was the first teacher there and taught grades seven to nine while the two Sisters taught grades one to six in the two room Belle Valley school building. A convent had been built and I boarded with the nuns. How delighted and happy I was living in the convent with the Sisters!

I was hired for one year only, as another Sister was to replace me the next year. Even though I had another teaching job waiting for me in Gibbons, I found it difficult to leave a place that I had loved so much.

Throughout all the time I attended and taught school, there was always an inspector who would drop in once or twice annually, unannounced. Until 1925 there was a shortage of teachers so there were a few hired who held teaching permits. Teachers were taught at Normal School and only at Camrose, Alberta. Students holding grade 11 or grade 12

diplomas attended as well as those with university degrees. The former received second or first class certificates respectively, while those from university attained degrees in Education.

It was my great pleasure to be asked to give an account for the Mearns book of what school was like in the olden days; it was certainly different from now and I must admit to feeling a bit nostalgic writing this report.

Egg Lake School District No. 429 (later St. Charles School District No. 429)

By Mr. Tom Logan and Mrs. Helen McGillis (Hermanutz)

The Egg Lake School District No. 429 was established on August 18, 1896. Nathaniel Logan, Alfred Beaudry, and John de Laronde were elected as trustees for the district. The first school built in the Egg Lake area was constructed on the SE 35-56-26-W4 about 1895. The land was owned by Nathaniel Logan who had lived in the district since the late 1870's. The quarter of land where the first school was located became known as the Egg Lake Mine quarter.



Egg Lake School

The schoolhouse was constructed of hewn logs, with a hand-sawn floor and ceiling. There were three windows on the north side and three windows on the south. The porch was on the east side facing the road allowance. The furnace in one corner of the school was the center of attention for a good part of the school year. Students coming with horses, some about four miles, were cold when they got to school. They would crowd around the furnace that sometimes would just be starting to heat up. After recess the clothes would be hung on pegs to dry behind the furnace.

On warmer days someone would throw slack on the furnace to make it smoke, resulting in longer recesses. One teacher warmed his lunch on top of it. One day he put an unopened can of pork and beans on top of the furnace and forgot about it. The can

exploded and beans and can ended up on the ceiling.

One year there were a lot of tent caterpillars. The young teacher was terrified of them so the older boys would put one on her cardigan. When she finally saw it she would go screaming down the aisles. The boys would get strapped but that was harder on her than on them.

Everybody who lived a mile or more from school came with horses. After school the race to get ready was a mess. The horses would get scared; we would have runaways or get bucked off. Somehow no one ever got hurt and we would all get home.

One recess many years ago, students playing in the schoolyard spotted a gopher running in the grass. Without any time lost, eight or ten boys took after the gopher. Nearby was a coal shed and under it went the little animal for shelter, but not for long as the boys decided to lift the shed from one side. After lifting it about three feet, out ran the gopher in a different direction. The boys dropped the shed and it fell on the leg of one of the boys, resulting in a compound fracture. The parent of the boy, Mr. Norman Royan, was notified about the accident. He took his son to the hospital in Edmonton to have the leg set and put into a cast. All for the sake of a gopher that got away!

During another recess, the school barn burned down. Two boys had probably been smoking cigarettes in one of the mangers and dropped hot ashes that started the fire. The barn was on the north side of the school. As there were no windows on that side of the school, the teacher was unable to see the barn from inside the schoolroom. A new barn was built on the west side of the school in full view of the classroom. It was reported that there were no more barns lost by fire.

Every year there would be a school concert. Some of the practicing was done at a neighbor's home because they had a piano. Everyone would go to the practice with sleighs and cutters. The piano was then brought to the school for the concert. All the parents and smaller kids would go to the concert as well, some coming from quite a few miles away.

The schoolhouse was not only used as a classroom, it was also used as a Catholic Church and for other functions. My parents, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Logan, were married in the school in 1904. One other marriage prior to that was Mr. and Mrs. Pete Bellerose of St. Albert. The old school was later used as a granary and barn. It was taken down in the early 1940's.

On January 3, 1939 the Egg Lake School District No. 429 was constituted into the Sturgeon School Division No. 24. July 12, 1948 approval was given for a site that was selected on the NE 28-56-

26-W4. The next year the name of the School District was changed to the St. Charles School District No. 429.

On a cold February 14, 1946 students showed up for class but the teacher did not show due to illness. The students decided to have a Valentine Party. The party turned into a mob scene resulting in substantial damage to the interior of the building requiring school closure for repairs. The parents of the offending students were required to pay for damages. Severe punishment included boys being whipped across their knuckles with a yardstick and girls being required to kneel in the corner of the classroom for lengthy periods for two weeks.

Students from Egg Lake School first attended St. Charles at Mearns in the fall of 1948 with the Sisters of Notre Dame providing the teaching staff. It is to be noted that on August 27th, 1948 the School Sisters of Notre Dame came to Mearns to teach in the Catholic schools of the area. They taught in Mearns from 1948 until 1969.

Vic Perras drove the first bus to St. Charles in 1949, a three-quarter ton with canvas on top of cattle racks and loose benches in the box. One of the first bus routes was fifty-six miles with only two miles of gravel. The rest consisted of dirt roads.

In May 1950 the Egg Lake School building was sold to Tom Logan and Henry Paepe, owners of Egg Lake Coal Company. It was moved onto the NE 36-56-26-W4, the site of the Hudson Bay Trading Post, and the original site of the Egg Lake School. In May 1951 the Egg Lake School site was sold to August Kluthe who, at the time, owned the rest of the quarter section.

Egg Lake School Days

By Yvonne Kluthe (Sabourin)

Winters truly were harsher in those years. Schools employed older students as janitors and their main job was to warm the building before the younger ones and the teacher arrived. Hector Cloutier was the janitor one winter. Although he did a great job, he sometimes unfortunately arrived at the same time we did. By the time he made kindling, started the fire, waited to put the coal on and actually warmed the whole room, it was often almost lunchtime. We were all given cod liver oil pills during the winter months to fight colds.

I remember the years we were janitors at the school. My brother, Paul, had to leave home earlier in the morning to start the fire at school. He would harness our dog Jip to the toboggan and Jip would take him to school. He tied Jip up in the barn at school during the day. Paul was always the first one

out of the schoolyard after school. It didn't take him long to harness Jip up and head for home. After school my sisters and I would sweep the floor and dust the desks. Lucy Kluthe always stayed to help so we could go home together.

I don't think the barn at school was cleaned very often. The back ends of the horses were always one and a half feet higher than the front ends.

In the summer when the boys wanted a longer recess they would put a pail of coal in the furnace when the teacher wasn't looking. After lunch, the school was then too warm for the children to attend classes so we were allowed to go and play some more baseball. Marcel Boisvert was always our catcher and he was an awesome catcher. If someone would happen to hit the ball outside of the school fence he would dive through the fence, retrieve the ball and dive right back in.

Girls were allowed to wear ski pants to school but we were to remove them when we got to school. One summer while we were practicing for the track meet our teacher, Mark Bernard, got me to wear some ladies bib overalls that had red and yellow braid on the bib. Somehow Mom found out I wore pants at school and I was reprimanded. In those days women were not allowed to wear pants of any kind at school.

Oh, the gourmet lunches we used to have sitting under the trees for shade when it was hot or behind the furnace in wintertime. We ate our peanut butter and sometimes jam sandwiches from our beautiful Rogers Golden Syrup pails or from lard pails.

On the odd summer day other schools such as Tellier School and Belle Valley would join our school for a game of baseball. The games were very exciting for us, especially when we won. When Mr. Vic Verhulst was the teacher we sometimes played games like prisoner's base all day long without classes. It was fun for us but the neighbors soon found out. That was the end of the teacher and the end of our fun.

One year we had a lot of caterpillars. The big boys would put caterpillars in the teacher's desk drawers. When she opened her desk drawer she would scream and grab the strap. Her breathing would escalate and a look of fury would come across her face. She would strap the big boys and you could tell that it hurt her more than it did them. Vera Walters, our teacher, was very young and I don't think she was five feet tall.

One day when the teacher didn't show because of sickness, the children were playing around. Marcel Boisvert threw a broom at my brother Louis (John) and the broom stuck in the wall just above the blackboard. Everyone thought it was very funny

so we each took a turn throwing brooms to see if they would stick in the wall. The plaster above the blackboard was a total mess. The next day it was not so funny, as we had to take our punishment. The girls had to kneel in a corner for long periods of time. Louis and Marcel wished that they had never gotten out of bed that day because the teacher used the yardstick across their knuckles and that really hurt.

Gophers didn't have a chance in the schoolyard. When we would see a gopher we would drop everything and form a fire brigade. We would proceed to pour water down the hole until the gopher came out to face a bunch of children with bats and sticks. We would kill it on the spot and get five cents a gopher tail for our efforts.

Some years we would have a Christmas concert. Some of the practicing was done at the Hewes' home as they had a piano and Mrs. Hewes was an excellent pianist. Everyone would go to the practice with sleighs and cutters as the snow was too deep for the old Model-A cars. The piano was then hauled to the school in a sleigh on skids. The parents and children would come from miles around to attend the Christmas concert.

When the School Sisters of Notre Dame came to Mearns in 1948 to provide Catholic education for the children, the school was not ready so the students had to start the school year at Egg Lake School. There were three students to a desk that had previously been occupied by two.

The Sisters lived at the rectory in Mearns until their convent was built. My dad would pick them up in the morning and in the late afternoon to transport them to and from the school. The nuns with their habits didn't leave much room for children to sit inside the car. We needed to roll down the windows on the Model-A and stand on the running board as he drove. The nuns walked to Mrs. August Kluthe's for lunch each day.

On one of the last days of the school year at Egg Lake School, the teacher thought it would be nice to treat the class to some ice cream. Some students brought ice and one student brought an ice cream maker. The morning was spent making large amounts of ice cream. In order to keep the ice cream frozen, we put the tub with the ice cream under the north side of the school in a hole that my brother Paul had dug a few months before. We rushed through our lunches eager to have our ice cream but much to our disappointment the ice cream was all gone. My brother Paul, George Kluthe, Joe Hermanutz and a number of the other boys had snuck under the school and ate all of the ice cream. Such were the good old days!

Egg Lake School Memories

By Johanna Brenneis (Kluthe)

Egg Lake School was a small one-room schoolhouse accommodating grades one to nine. It was heated by a big round pot-bellied stove, sometimes too cold or too hot and smoky. One of our many teachers thought the school was too hot and smoky one day, so the students and the teacher all went to play in snow up to our knees, until we were caught by a parent who was not too happy. The teacher was reported and subsequently fired.

The children got to school by horse and buggy, sleighs, walking, or horseback. In the winter months we went to school by a caboose. The caboose was a wooden shack (about 8 feet wide by 10 feet) on sleighs pulled by a horse. Inside it had benches on either side with a wood-burning stove in the front corner. The driver was in the caboose with two holes for the reigns inside. He had a window to see out of. He was in charge of keeping the fire burning. To be mischievous we used to ride on the roof of the caboose only to be caught by our parents and be reprimanded. The winters were very cold with a lot of snow. Often we would have to go through the fields because the roads were drifted over.

In the summer months we would go to school in a rubber tired cart pulled by a horse. One time the horse had diarrhea and the driver got a very unpleasant shower. That's one memory we'll never forget.

We were called into class by the ringing of a big hand bell. The classroom seemed to be very crowded and older children were expected to help the younger ones.

The following are excerpts from annual meeting of Ratepayers of Egg Lake School District as obtained from Alberta Department of Education.

January 7, 1933 – Moved by T.D Cunningham, seconded by Fred Altmiks, that we accept Miss Marguerite Logan's tender for washing the school floors, windows and toilets at the rate of one dollar ninety cents (\$1.90) per washing. Moved by Narcisse Fortier, seconded by T.D Cunningham that we accept Mr. Henry Altmiks tender for supplying 15 cords of green wood delivered to the schoolyard at the rate of one dollar (\$1.00) per cord. Moved by T.D. Cunningham, seconded by Cyrille Cloutier that the secretary treasurer sends a resolution to the trustees' convention to reduce the minimum salary of the teacher to six hundred dollars (\$600.00) per school year.

May 27, 1935 – In May of 1935 the Chief of

Attendance responded to a letter sent by Cyrille Cloutier, Sec Treasurer of Egg Lake School district suggesting the closing of the school in the month of January with the time made up by only having one month holiday in summer. In the letter the parents argued that there are pupils in the senior public school grades who may be better able to attend school during the winter than in the spring and harvest months when the larger ones might be of some service at home, and explained that they were of the opinion that the school board should consider the matter from this standpoint. No change was made to the school year.

January 16, 1937 – Moved by Robert Lirondelle, seconded by Norman Logan that Ed Vandenhouten get the contract for supplying 10 cords of green wood and pile it in the school yard before the 1st of March 1937 at the rate of eighty five (.85) per cord of 4 ft by 8 ft by 16 inches long. Moved by Robert Lirondelle, seconded by Noah Boisvert that Mrs. L. A. Logan have the contract for washing floors, windows and toilets once per month at the rate of two dollars and thirty five cents (\$2.35) per washing.

January 14, 1939 – present 11 ratepayers, 18 electors out of a possible 82. Moved by T. Cunningham, seconded by A. Houle that the tender of Lucienne Cloutier for scrubbing school floors, windows and toilets the last Saturday of each month at the rate of one dollar and seventy cents (\$1.70) per washing be accepted. Moved by D. Hews, seconded by O. Sabourin that the secretary requests the Sturgeon School board to appoint a secretary capable of speaking both languages, French and English.

February 10, 1940 – Moved by T. Cunningham, seconded by P. Hermanutz that the tender of E. Vandenhouten for supplying 15 cords of green wood, subject to approval of Sturgeon School Division #24, at one dollar ten cents (\$1.10) a cord be accepted.

Egg Lake School Census 1925-1926 (children aged 6 to 15 by Jan. 1, 1926)

Violet, Julia, John and Rachel Brown; Paul, Jeanne and Louise Cloutier; Harvey, Gordon and Gladys Cunningham; Molly, Norah and Francis Dwyer; Sarah and Annie Lamoureux; Victor, Ellie, Robert, Emile, Grace, Albert, Romeo, Beatrice, Antoinette and Billie Lirondelle; Harry, Louise, Thomas, Maggie, Eddie, Grace, Arthur and Beatrice Logan; Barbara Lutz; Lucia, Henri and Philip Poirier; Estelle, Alice, Omer and Odille Poulin; Denise and Ida Rottot; Frances and Rosie Schuster; Eddie Vandenhouten; Doris and Willy Wright.

Tellier School District No. 1490

By Rita (Gibeau) Prefontaine, Olive (Gibeau) Vest, and Romeo Gibeau

The first Tellier School was a one-room school built in 1907 under authority of the Tellier School District No. 1490 that was founded in 1906. It was situated 3 miles north of Morinville. In 1920, due to the lack of space and the poor condition of this original school, it was replaced with a new modern school at the same location – the envy of all the surrounding schools. This one-room bilingual school served its purpose well (a June 1939 roll call listed 33 students in attendance) until it became necessary – with the changing times and the centralization of schools – to join the Sturgeon School Division in 1939. Eventually, Tellier School was closed and the school building was moved to Calahoo in 1948. The majority of the students who had attended Tellier School were then bussed to St. Charles School in Mearns with most of the remainder going to Cunningham School. The one remaining landmark at the site today (2005) is a large evergreen tree planted there by Mr. Robert Tellier many years ago.

In summer, the roads were sometimes very muddy as there were no gravel roads at the time. In winter, snow banks were sometimes so high we could hardly get through (a far cry from the bus systems of today). Arriving at school, we unhitched and tied the horse in a stall in the school's barn for the day. We would feed him a sheaf (a bundle of hay or grain stalks) at noon.



Tellier School in 1922. School building was moved to Calahoo in 1948

In summer, school started at 9:00 a.m. but in winter, school started at 9:30 a.m. so that we wouldn't have to leave home in the dark. As mentioned, our school was a one-room school – with room for between 25-35 students from grades one to eight. These grades were then divided into divisions – division 1 had grades 1, 2, and 3;

division 2 had grades 4, 5, and 6; and division 3 had grades 7 & 8. This facilitated the teaching of social studies, sciences and art as each division studied these subjects together. In this way, over the three years, the whole curriculum was covered for each grade.

Miss Lucille Tellier (Mrs Tony Hittinger) was one of our teachers during our family's attendance at this school. There was no teacherage at this school so Miss Tellier traveled four miles from Morinville where she lived with her parents. The bigger boys always unhitched her horse in the morning, and then hitched it back up at night. Some of our other teachers we remember were: Beatrice Thibodeau, Justine Hittinger, Germaine Provost, Claude Bisson and Yvonne Desmarais. The caretaker was Mr. Mike Hanley, who always had the school warm in the morning – the heater being a big pot-bellied furnace (on which we would often thaw our frozen ink bottles) in one corner of the school. He also brought in drinking water for us. As we entered the school, there was a cloakroom on each side – the boys hung their coats on one side and the girls on the other. Girls did not wear slacks to school, but in winter, they usually wore snow pants. These were melton cloth, elastic waisted, and were pulled up and over their skirts – and were removed upon entering school.

The bell would ring to announce the beginning of the school day. After the 'Morning Prayer', classes started with literature for the higher grades & reading for the lower grades. After the higher grades were given their assignments, the lower grades were taught their reading – each student having a turn to read out loud, hoping that last night's reading homework would be remembered.

After first recess, math (arithmetic as it was called then) was the order of the day. Correction of last night's homework was done by handing your paper to the pupil in front of you to mark as the teacher was giving the answers. No one cheated.

Lunch was eaten at our desks and was a time of easy camaraderie. Sometimes in the winter, if our sandwiches were frozen, we had a big camping toaster that one of the Dad's had made on which we placed our sandwiches in order to toast them over the fire in the stove. After lunch, it was outside for games. In the summer we played: scrub, marbles, jacks, hopscotch, anti-I-over, pump-pump pull away and kick the can. In the winter we played: fox and the goose, building snowmen, making snow angels, erecting forts for snowball fights, etc. When the weather was inclement to outdoor activities, we had blackboard games to keep us busy; or a favorite story read to us by our teacher. The older girls



Recess at Tellier School in 1939. Back row L to R: Peter DeRudder, Honoreana DeRudder, George Saffin, Pearl Saffin, Margaret Muller. Middle row L to R: Ralph Hanly, Romeo Gibeau, Mattie Tellier, Louise Meunier. Front row L to R: Georgette Houle, Roberta Hanly, Adele DeRudder, Rosanne Meunier, Lorraine Muller

sometimes brought knitting, crocheting or needlework. Another extra-curricular activity that the senior boys undertook one spring was the building of a miniature log cabin. Joe and Tony Byers, Emile and Rene DeRudder, Marcel and Lucien Tellier as well as Johnny Kluthe were all involved in this project, with perhaps a few helpful ideas given by their fathers.

At one o'clock the school bell rang for afternoon classes, when sciences and social studies were taught by divisions. To depict the country we were studying in social, we used a big sand box at the back of the classroom. From plastiscine (a modeling clay-like material), we created camels for Africa, green palm trees for Hawaii & the Caribbean, and even mountains for Switzerland. Our imagination was limitless. The sciences were also made interesting by observing stars, the moon, and plant and animal life in the schoolyard and in our own back yards. After the last recess was the time for French and religion classes, one half hour for each subject.

On Fridays the curriculum was changed a bit. The morning math classes were changed into quizzes where flash cards were used in the lower grades for additions and subtractions, and for multiplication tables in the older grades. English

classes were spelling bees for each class: boy, did you study your spelling! And let's not forget the memory work – poems of 3 to 4 lines were memorized in the lower grades to much longer poems in the higher grades such as: "The Cremation of Sam McGee", "The Highwayman", "Little Baptiste", "The song My Paddle Sings" by Pauline Johnson, and many more. On Friday afternoons we also had art classes as well as a period for health, which included teaching manners, from table etiquette to social graces.

Olive has vivid memories of anxious moments when the school inspector (she remembers Mr. Ernest Meaden) visited our school, talking and discussing matters with our teacher who would then "put us through our paces" for his benefit.

Students of all ages always looked forward to the annual Christmas concert and many happy noon hours were spent practicing for this special event. On the night of the concert, parents turned out in full force to see their children perform. Some performances we remember are: Olive, in a dress sewn by our Mom, singing (with all the motions and facial expressions) the song "In My Sweet Little Alice Blue Gown"; Lucille Hanley singing "Somewhere Over The Rainbow"; as well as Agnes Dubois, sitting in an old rocking chair,



Girls at Tellier School

(accompanied by her brother George?) both wearing white wigs and singing "Dans L'Bon Vieux Temps Sa C'passait D'Meme".

There was always a picnic near the last day of school. Parents that could come would encourage our games, etc. and of course someone always brought lunch, ice cream and drinks, like lemonade.

Although education was very different from today's classes, we feel that we had a very well



Boys at Tellier School in 1938. Back row L to R: Johnny Kluthe, Marcel Tellier, Emile DeRudder, Rene DeRudder. Middle row L to R: Peter DeRudder, Lucien Tellier, Ralph Hanly, George Saffin, George Dubois. Front row L to R: Tony Byers, Romeo Gibeau, Matt Tellier, Joe Byers

rounded education. We, the former students of Tellier School, have fond memories of our school days and recognize the dedication and devotion of our teachers who had the formidable job of simultaneously teaching eight grades in a one-room school.

Interesting facts taken from Tellier School files: In 1939 there were 28 to 30 pupils; from 1934 to 1938 teacher salaries ranged from \$750 to \$840.

Memories of Tellier School

By Romeo Gibeau

- A one-room school with an oiled wooden floor, heated by a huge pot-bellied stove at the back of the room.
- A Union Jack fluttering from the flagpole in front of the school.
- A large spruce tree in the yard on the south side of the school – well suited for climbing.
- School year-end picnics with homemade vanilla ice cream, and running in the "three-legged" race with Mathias Tellier.
- Eavesdropping on the senior classes (grades 7 and 8), learning and reciting "The Cremation of Sam McGee."
- Hormidas Houle singing "Quand j'étais chez mon père, garçon non marier."
- Christmas concerts and my sister Olive singing "In my sweet little Alice Blue Gown."
- Our horse and cutter (sleigh) with buffalo robe and with bricks heated in the oven by Mom to keep our feet warm on cold winter mornings.
- Snow and wind howling through the schoolyard and being four miles from home and a warm kitchen.
- The winter shortcut along the NAR tracks through Philippe Meunier's field.
- Taking turns with my siblings on one pair of wooden skis, up and down the snow banks on the side of the road, towed by a rope tied behind the cutter on the way to and from school
- Frozen ink bottles thawing on top of the pot-bellied stove.
- The horse barn in the southeast corner of the schoolyard with, depending on the time of the year, cutters or gigs (carts) parked nearby.
- A belated recognition of our young teachers' dedication and devotion to the task of teaching eight grades simultaneously in one classroom.

L'Abbe School District No. 1842 (excerpts taken from other history books)

L'Abbe School District No. 1842 was established on June 25, 1908. It was a one-room

school, complete with barn and outdoor toilets, constructed on the southeast corner of Mr. Roch De Tonnancour's farm at the cost of \$1,000 for buildings and furnishings.

Vic Verhulst recalls: It was quite an ordinary school except for its unusual construction. It seemed to be too high for its other dimensions! It had a very high ceiling and a second story, which except for a few odds and ends was completely empty. The upstairs was meant to be a teacherage and he believes one or two teachers did live up there in the early days. This strange building sometimes creaked in the wind, and he was almost sure he saw it swaying to and fro during gusts.



First Labbé School constructed in 1908

This first school site was five miles east and one-half mile south of the hamlet of Riviere Qui Barre. Senior trustee was Ulderic L'Abbe, H. Boissonault was the treasurer.

In 1933 the teacher was Mrs. Jeannette Champagne and the grade levels being taught were from one to nine. Mr. Scott and Mr. Leblanc were the School Inspectors, and some of the School Board members were Mark Saffin, Rom De Tonnancour and Louis Turgeon.

On January 3, 1939 L'Abbe School District No. 1842 became part of Subdivision No. 2 of the Sturgeon School Division No. 24. Mr. Ernest Meaden was the secretary of the Sturgeon School Division at that time.

On June 5, 1942 approval was given for a new site on which to build a more modern school with a science room and septic tanks in the basement. A new brick school was built, located one-half mile north of the original site.

With a shortage of pupils in 1948, the Sturgeon School Division Board sought Ministerial approval to move the L'Abbe School. This approval was not granted in view of a strong expression of local feeling. In 1949 the school was closed down and arrangements were made for transportation of the



Second Labbé School constructed on DeTonnancour farm then moved to Mearns in 1949.

children to other schools. Approval was given to move the school building to the St. Charles School District No. 429.

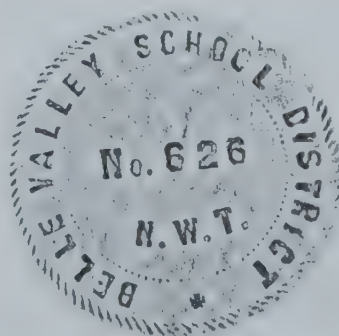
Belle Valley School District No. 626 (formerly Bellvalley)

By Margaret McCrae (Sheehan)

Bellvalley School District No. 626 was established on August 23rd, 1901 with its own elected School Board responsible for the administration of the school. It provided the educational needs of the settlers in its time. Communities were small, distances were great, and communication slow. There was very little need for education beyond Grade 8. While enrollments varied over the years, by 1921 Bellvalley had grown to be a two-room school.

On January 3, 1939 Bellvalley School District No. 626 was constituted in the Sturgeon School Division No. 24 and into Sub division No. 2. That year Alma Steffes taught twenty-nine students from Grades 1 to 8 inclusive. In 1940 a second classroom opened to an enrollment of twenty-two pupils in grades nine, 11 and 12. Then high school enrollment declined. There were only thirteen students in the school year of 1947-48, one of these being alone in grade nine. At that time centralization was taking place and because of its dwindling high school enrollment, Bellvalley School was closed in August

of 1948 and sold for one dollar to the Mearns community where it became part of St. Charles School on September 28, 1948. In July of 1954, it was torn down and a new building was erected to replace it. In 1969 this new building became the community hall.



Belle Valley School District Seal

Actually, the two-room Bellvalley School was “unsuitable” right from the beginning. The construction left much to be desired. The plaster pulled away from the wooden laths on the ceiling and big chunks of plaster used to drop down on the unsuspecting teachers and students. The wind whistled through the big windows and the furnace would not work. There were times when teachers would have been glad to go back to the pot-bellied stove.

The school inspectors at that time were Mr. LeBlanc and Mr. Scott. The annual Inspector’s visit was often a cause for anxiety for the teacher and her pupils. The need to make a good impression was made very clear. The Inspector’s exact time of arrival was “sometime this week” and the students often found themselves with two or three days to practice their “Sunday behavior”. However, upon his arrival, their fears were soon dispelled as they quickly discovered the Inspector to be a very warmhearted, caring and friendly individual.

Researching our records and minds makes one wonder why they were called “the good old days.” Is it because they are now gone? Or were they really that great? Certainly the happy memories and fun times compensated for the many inconveniences and hard times that were endured.

Winter, especially, was a time for the stouthearted. It seemed “Old Man Winter” was more severe, over-stayed his welcome, and certainly graced us with much more snow than we have ever had since. Our lack of facilities, the cold classrooms and cloakrooms, and the frozen lunches were all accepted as the norm. One cold weekend the water cooler broke because someone had forgotten to empty it. Replacing it, however, was another matter. A satisfactory explanation, in writing, had to be given to the School Board to account for this gross negligence. With a very limited budget to work on, even this comparatively small expense was closely scrutinized before it was authorized. Requisitions had to be made in writing for any items necessary to

carry on the school needs, be it window shades, a new furnace, a water cooler or a bat and two balls which had to last the season.

In the summer of 1939, permission was granted from the School Board to have the students immunized against diphtheria. Arrangements were made with Dr. Ferguson to provide this service to the school.

Water for the school was hauled from a well at Dick Wills, a neighbor who lived nearby. Every noon-hour two boys had the job of hauling two pails of water to the school. Our records show that in 1943 Charley Montpellier completed a new well on the school site and gave a written guarantee that, for one year, it would produce at least one barrel of water per day. It is hard to say just how long the well lasted as nobody can recall that a well ever existed on the site.

In the winter of 1948 Walter Ellett, secretary of the Bellvalley School District, ordered a load of coal for the school. A couple of weeks later he received a notice by mail that the coal had been dumped two miles south of the school. He was asked to make the necessary arrangements to have it moved to the school.

Recalling school days could not happen without remembering the horses that provided year-round transportation for all except for those students who lived within walking distance. This mode of traveling to and from school was an experience that, in spite of its obvious demands, often provided us with many exciting times. There was always a high-spirited horse that had its own idea of discipline. Runaways were frequent, often dangerous, and provided many students with the exercise of walking home. Caboose and cutters with their passengers, books, and lunch pails were often “upsot” in the snow bank, thanks to the stubbornness and agility of “Old Nellie” or “Frem”.

Springtime with its floods and heavy run-offs found most of the students traveling on horseback, often two to a horse. Many days there were more than twenty horses at school.

In September of 1948 the barn and other outbuildings were sold to Ovila Sabourin from Mearns for \$165.

On November 19, 1948, approval was given for the sale of the land on which the Bellvalley School was located. On November 25, 1964, it was sold for \$150 to Rene Bourbonnais of Riviere Qui Barre who owned the adjacent land.

At that time, a question arose as to the correct name of the district. The order establishing the district and the file throughout showed the name as Bellvalley Public School District No. 626. Locally it



Belle Valley Classroom. Ruth Ellett, Dan Brenneis and Pat Sheehan take their turn at the typewriters



The first St. Charles School class after Belle Valley School was moved to Mearns

was established that the district called it Belle Valley. In February 1965 a Ministerial Order changed the name of Bellvalley Public School District No. 626 to Belle Valley Public School District No. 626.

Gathering this history has given many pleasant hours of reminiscing about the “good old school days”. Former students recalled when:

- We were doing a chemistry experiment and we asked Helen to hold the wire. We turned on the switch and she let out a terrible scream.
- A mouse went up Elsie’s pant leg and down the other one. It was almost nearly noon anyway!
- Jim told the teacher it was getting too warm in school. She checked the thermostat. It was moving up – he had tied a string to it and was pulling it up. The temperature was rising indeed!
- Our parents were so worried that we weren’t going to pass grade nine because our teacher, Miss Mellandaine, never gave us homework. What a gem she was and we all passed!
- Bruce came to school in his Air Force uniform. He had quit school in December 1941 to join up but was told that he was two months too young, so he went to work in Edmonton until his enlistment in February 1942.
- One of the girls put a frog down Cameron’s neck. What a foot race they had. She was saved by the bell!
- Nelson came to school the day after he had killed a skunk. The odor was so overpowering that the teacher asked him to sit outside.
- The boys would often tie Leo up and leave him outside lying in the yard for a couple of hours.
- We went on a school picnic to Lake Nakamun in

the back of a truck. With no safety rules or life jackets we filled up several rowboats and headed out. What fun! Only the good Lord knows why or how we survived.

- We would go up into the attic at noon hour and break the plaster in the ceiling over Miss Johnson’s desk. She never did figure out what was happening.
- Leonard and Joyce were married. They were the only school sweethearts we know of in our school.
- We would get our cod liver oil pills every morning. Someone would always break one and so we had to endure that terrible smell all morning.
- On several occasions Gordon put .22 shells in the fire of our pot-bellied stove. It is a wonder anyone survived!

The old school system had much to commend it. Older children learned to help younger brothers and sisters. By listening to lessons taught in the more advanced grades, students had a built-in enrichment program without realizing it. In general, the schools of the early years fostered a spirit of cooperation that made for good citizenship and Christian living.

In spite of all this, few people today would want to go back to the one-room school system. It served its purpose and served it well, but became inadequate to meet the needs of the technological age. Centralization has extended the possibilities for education to the point where most rural young people can acquire a high school certificate and go on to higher education if they have the ability and desire to do so.

The “Little Red Schoolhouse” is gone but it has left many happy memories, both for teachers and students.



Ida, George and Marie VanHove head off to school in the "rig" – 1948



A pyramid of Belle Valley boys in photo taken on a field trip to Borden Park in Edmonton in 1944
Schools, Belle Valley



Belle Valley School. Back row L to R: Dan Brenneis, Maurice Brenneis. Third row L to R: Pat Sheehan, Angus Morrison, Gordon McGillis, Dan O'Neill, Jim Falls, Jim Ellett, Maurice Perras. Second row L to R: Keith Ellett, Alex Brenneis, Ralph Brenneis, Oscar Brenneis, Oliver Brenneis. Front row L to R: Conrad Bourbonnais, Johnny Polakoviis, Jack Stevens, Leo Falls, Norman Brenneis, Joe Sheehan



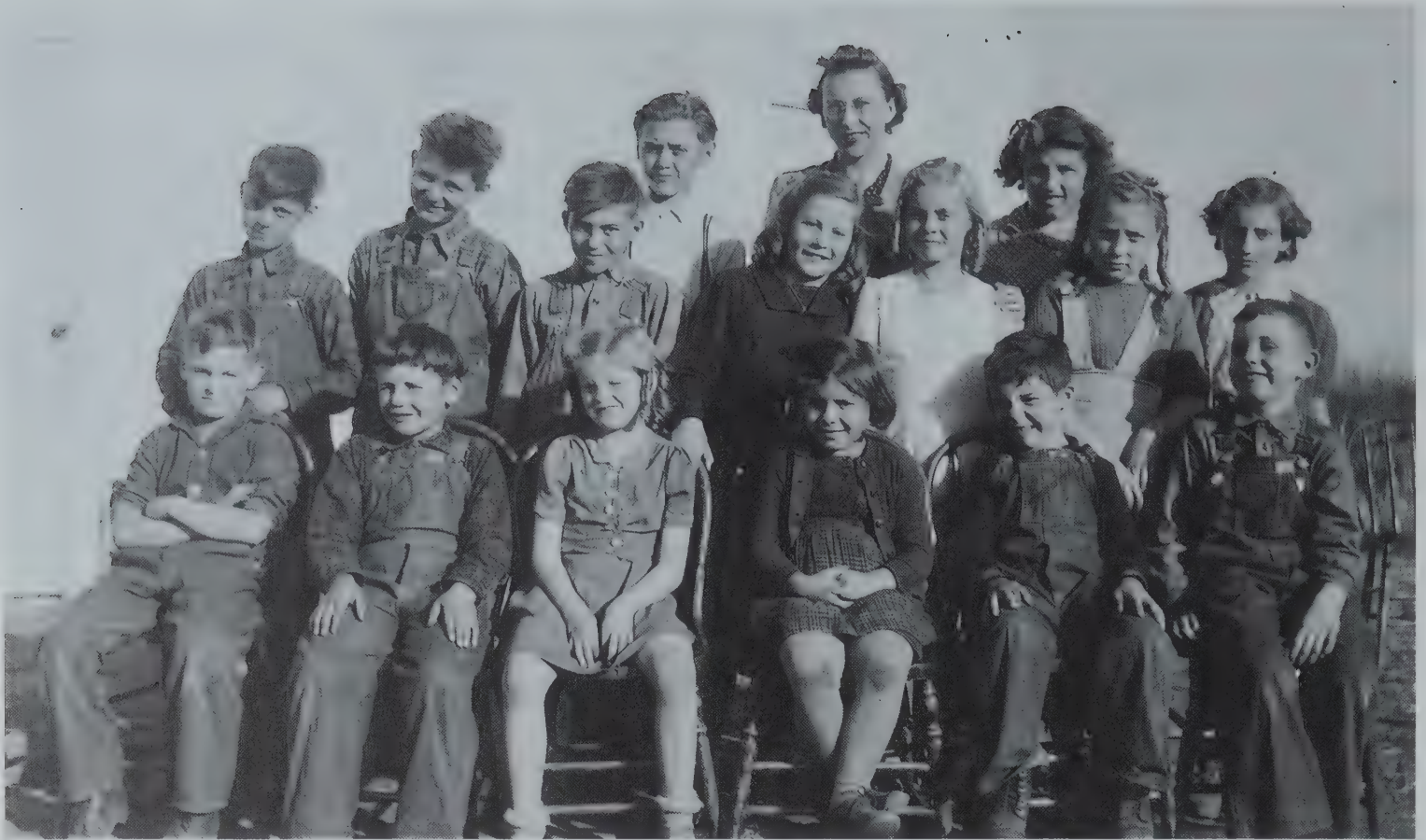
Belle Valley School. Back row L to R: Dorothy Ellett, Pauline Douziech. Middle row L to R: Therese Hurter, Theresa Douziech, Jesse Duncan, Ruth Ellett, Mavis Gill, Louise Ellett. Front row L to R: Cecile Douziech, Kathleen Morrison, Evelyn Sheehan, Verda Williams, Mildred Ellett, Bernice O'Neill



Belle Valley senior class of 1944. Back row L to R: Maurice Perras, Angus Morrison, Dan Brenneis, Maurice Brenneis, Gordon McGillis, Pauline Douziech, Dorothy Ellett, Jim Falls. Middle row L to R: Pat Sheehan, Jessie Duncan, Ruth Ellett, Mavis Gill, Therese Douziech, Violet Brenneis, Jim Ellett. Front row L to R: Ralph Brenneis, Joe Sheehan, Justine Hittinger, Louise Ellett, Dan O' Neill, Alex Brenneis



Belle Valley class in 1943. Bruce Gill is the student in the front row in Air Force uniform. He served overseas and returned home safely, though at one point was reported missing in action.



Belle Valley junior class of 1944. Back row L to R: Keith Ellett, Alice Hittinger, Ada Perrott. Middle row L to R: Oscar Brenneis, Oliver Brenneis, John Polakovits, Cecile Douziech, Mildred Ellett, Bernice O'Neill, Kathleen Morrison. Front Row L to R: Leo Falls, Norman Brenneis, Verda Williams, Conrad Bourbonnais, Jack Stevens



Belle Valley School. Back row L to R: Maurice Perras, Angus Morrison, Dan Brenneis, Maurice Brenneis, Gordon McGillis, Dan O'Neill, Jim Falls. Middle row L to R: Joe Sheehan, Pat Sheehan, Jessie Duncan, Justine Hittinger (teacher), Mavis Gill, Alex Brenneis, Jim Ellett, Ralph Brenneis. Front row L to R: Louise Ellett, Dorothy Ellett, Pauline Douziech, Ruth Ellett, Theresa Douziech, Violet Brenneis



Back row L to R: Violet Brenneis, Mavis Gill, Dorothy Ellett, Louise Ellett, Pauline Tellier, Dan O'Neill, Raymond Como, Angus Morrison, Lewis Falls, Robert Morrison. Middle row L to R: Kathleen Morrison, Jeannine Tellier, Bernice O'Neill, Ada Perrott, Jim Ellett, Alex Brenneis. Front row L to R: Oscar Brenneis, Norman Brenneis, Oliver Brenneis, Jack Stevens



Mildred, Keith, Dorothy and Ruth Ellett on their way to Belle Valley School in 1940

The Planning Stages

After the Second World War, the Social Credit Government pursued a policy of centralization for many of the smaller rural schools. In August of 1948 the Alberta Department of Education decided that it would be profitable to combine the three country schools: Belle Valley, Tellier, and Egg Lake. The plan of the department was to move the two-room Belle Valley School to Mearns and to include the students from all three former schools at this centralized school that would be renamed St. Charles. The people around the area asked for nuns as teachers, since the majority of the students would



St. Charles Rhythm Band on convent steps – 1950-51

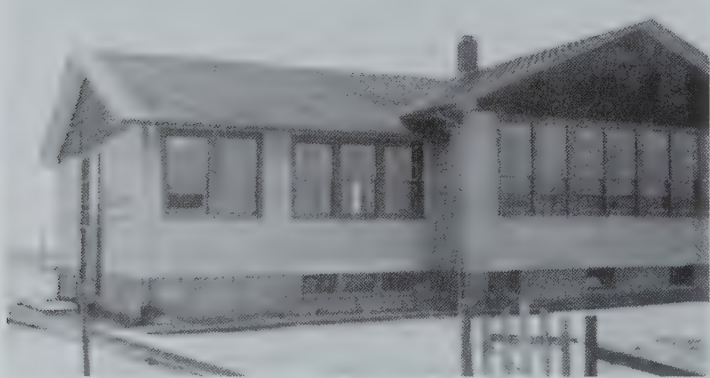


Christmas concert 1963

be Catholic. The preceding May, Father Merchant, who was pastor of St. Charles Parish at the time, had put in a request to Mother Pius of the School Sisters of Notre Dame. He asked for teaching sisters to be assigned to the school in Mearns.

St. Charles School 1948-1969

As kids we experienced all kinds of benefits that we didn't appreciate at the time. I imagine that many of us now look back on our years at St. Charles School and wonder how we were so lucky to have had the opportunities we did. When good teachers were at a premium, how did we ever get the School Sisters of Notre Dame in a remote rural area like Mearns? We were the fortunate students who benefited from the dedication of these women who lived far from their families. The Sisters' principle focus was to provide us with the best education possible within a Catholic context.



St. Charles School built in 1954. Students started the 1954/55 schoolyear in the church basement and moved into the new two-classroom school in the early part of 1955

What great memories we carry from these school years; the choir practices and singing for Easter and Christmas masses, end-of year school picnics, playing ball at recess, skating during recess and lunch hour, Christmas concerts, playing tag around the rink on the piles of snow, forts in the bush, building playhouses with the boards from the old buildings that had been taken down, sunny times swinging and teeter-tottering with our friends, the rainbow drill performed at the festival in Morinville, mural making, science experiments, working but listening at the same time while our teacher taught the other grades, first Friday confessions and mass at the church. Every one of us has special memories of school friends and teachers. We lived in a peaceful setting that only now we recognize in hindsight. We were blessed.

St. Charles First School Year, 1948-49

On August 27th, 1948, Sister Mary Edward, Sister M. Henrita, and Sister M. Clovis arrived in

Mearns with Mother Provincial M. Pius. Since the convent had not yet been built, Father Merchant gave the sisters the rectory as their living quarters until the convent could be built.

On the opening day of school the Sisters were ready to begin teaching but the Belle Valley School had not yet been moved into Mearns. There had been considerable opposition to this Catholic school as the neighboring village of Alcomdale had been interested in having the centralized school built in their community. As a result of this opposition, there was a considerable delay in moving the building onto the site in Mearns.

On September 14 the Sturgeon School Board asked the Sisters to begin teaching at the abandoned one-roomed school at Egg Lake. It was thought that in a few weeks they could begin teaching in Mearns. The Egg Lake School was in a dilapidated condition and the building was heated by a single large stove. The schoolhouse was constructed of hewn logs, with a hand-sawn floor and ceiling. There was a stove in one corner of the classroom. Both teachers had to attempt to teach in the one classroom. In spite of the many hardships the students and teachers were up against, the enrollment doubled within the first two weeks of school, from 26 to 52 students. Many of the children came to school in carts or on horseback. There were days when as many as nine horses were tied in the old school barn. Ovila Sabourin drove the Sisters to school in a 1928 Ford car.

On September 28th the Belle Valley School was finally moved to Mearns but nearly a whole month passed before it was moved onto the foundation. The two-room Belle Valley School building was unsuitable even on its former site. The plaster pulled away from the wooden laths on the ceiling. the furnace did not work well and wind whistled through the big windows. Meanwhile, conditions at the Egg Lake School had become more difficult as the roads got rougher and the weather turned colder. Finally, after the Belle Valley School was made secure on the foundation at the Mearns site, the parents, students, and teachers took matters into their own hands.

On October 25th the sisters and pupils moved out of the Egg Lake School. A large truck preceded them, carrying the desks and furniture to their new location. On this and the following day, many parents helped to scrub the floors and desks as well as to paint the walls. Many of the desks had been gathered from surrounding schools. There were at least eight different types, several in poor condition. Three days later on the following Monday, October 28th, classes began at 9:00 a.m. with an enrollment

of 84 pupils. At 9:30 a.m. Mr. Scott, the superintendent, arrived and was surprised to find that classes could begin so soon. Sister M. Edward taught 42 students in grades five to ten while Sister M. Henrita taught 42 students in grades one to four. Four other pupils enrolled shortly after classes started. On December 2nd, Mr. Scott paid his first official visit to the school. He was pleased with what he observed and generously supplied the needs of the school.

According to the *School Act of Alberta*, parents could request to have their children instructed in French. Several parents wanted French to be taught so Sister M. Clovis gave religious instruction in French. After Sister M. Clovis left Mearns in January, the other two Sisters took over this instruction.

In May all the pupils took part in the track meet that was held in Morinville for the neighboring schools.

On June 1, 1949 the first group of St. Charles' students made their First Communion. Included in this group were: Vera Brenneis, Estelle Gibeau, Alexander Krywko, Edward Krywko, Darlene Lirondelle, Elizabeth Polakovits, Daniel Pelletier, Mariette Tellier and Denis Vandenhouten. On the last day of school in June 1949, the students were taken to a picnic area in Edmonton to celebrate the completion of their first year at St. Charles School.

On July 3rd, Archbishop MacDonald administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to 27

students. This was the first group of St. Charles' students to receive Confirmation. The following students were a part of this group: Dorothy Altmiks, Louise Altmiks, Evelyn Boddez, Joyce Boddez, Lorraine Boisvert, Pauline Boisvert, Vera Brenneis, Laurent Durand, Estelle Gibeau, Eugene Gibeau, Simon Houle, Betty Kluthe, Johanna Kluthe, Alexander Krywko, Edward Krywko, Albert LeBlanc, Mary LeBlanc, Annette Lirondelle, Darlene Lirondelle, Caroline Massie, Thelma Massie, Richard Nobert, Elizabeth Polakovits, Daniel Pelletier, Lionel Sabourin, Denis Vandenhouten and Ernest Wulff.

The 1949-1950 School Year

The next fall when school was about to begin again, increased enrollment made it necessary to open a third classroom. The trustee who represented St. Charles School hired a Protestant teacher. However, the local Board intervened and one of its members, Mr. Peter Sheehan, along with Father Merchant, managed to change this appointment by securing the services of a Catholic teacher before school opened. This first lay teacher was Miss Justine Hittinger.

Justine remembers how she had previously been teaching in Belle Valley School and she got a call from Father Merchant. He told her that he was attending a meeting and that he wanted her to stay up late that night until she heard from him. He offered her the job that same evening. She was hired



Miss Hittinger's 1949 Class. Back row L to R: Oscar Brenneis, Raymond Golden, Lawrence Kluthe, Jack Massie, Yvonne Sabourin, Lucy Kluthe, Miss Justine Hittinger. Middle row L to R: Eugenie DeRudder, Rita Sabourin, Louise Boisvert, Alice Altmiks, Evelyn Sheehan, Annette Boisvert. Front row L to R: Leo Falls, Norman Brenneis, Paul Sabourin, Victor Boddez



Sister Henrita's 1949 Class (Grade 1-3). Standing at (L-R): Sister Henrita, Lionel Sabourin, Ernie Wulff, Richard Nobert, Dennis Vandenhouten, Willie Kluthe, Philip DeRudder, Pauline Boisvert, Marie Krywko. Left row front to back: ... John Krywko, Lionel Durand. Second row, front to back: Madeleine Vandenhouten, Leonard Nobert, Lawrence Lirondelle, Thelma Massie, Daniel Pelletier, Simon Houle; Third row, front to back: Maureen Sheehan, Charlie Pelletier, Sharon Borle, Roger Bourbonnais, Juliette Houle, Laurent Durand. Fourth row front to back: Evelyn Boddez, Darlene Lirondelle, Elizabeth Polakovits, Fifth row, front to back: Carolyn Massie, Dorothy Muller, Vera Brenneis, George Houle

for one year to teach grades seven to nine at St. Charles School. She boarded in Mearns. Justine was the first lay teacher hired for St. Charles School. She recalls that she had no discipline problems. One of her memories was how the students tried to make their 'First Fridays'. The goal was to make nine 'First Fridays' consecutively. She told how the students brought their breakfasts and lunches on the first Friday of each month. The bus drivers co-operated in bringing the pupils a half hour earlier so that they could attend Mass at 8:30 a.m. and at 9:00 a.m. during the winter. From mid December until March, classes began only at 9:30 a.m. It was a disappointment to everyone, Justine said, when Good Friday fell on the first Friday of the month and as a result the students couldn't meet their goal.

During the life of the school in Mearns, many changes took place. Other buildings were moved in to serve as schools when the enrollment was high. The range of grades increased to include grade eleven. In later years the grade level dropped to grade nine and eventually to grade six. The L'Abbe School was moved to Mearns on September 6th in 1949. The enrollment at this time was 94 students taught by three teachers: Sister M. Henrita taught grades one to three with 40 students, Sister M. Edward taught grades four to six with 32 students and Miss Hittinger taught grades seven to nine with 22 students.

During this second year two musicians came to the school each week from Edmonton. Mr. Rychel taught piano lessons to a few pupils and Mr. Nickelwitz gave lessons in violin and guitar. The parents held a pie social and collected enough money, about \$180 to buy a piano for the school. The School Board paid half the cost. The piano was kept in the L'Abbe School building. At Christmas the pupils held a concert. A large and appreciative audience attended.

During the spring months of 1950 the dingy woodwork in the two-room school was painted light green. This greatly improved the appearance of the two classrooms. Members of the local board and some pupils volunteered their services for this work.

On April 28th the pupils took part in a music festival held in Morinville. Several individuals and groups of pupils received certificates of merit.

Miss Justine Hittinger resigned at the end of the June term. During the summer months the two-room school was given a first coat of stucco. On August 19th, Sister M. Clarice replaced Miss Hittinger. She also took on the responsibility of teaching French.

The 1950-1951 School Year

St. Charles School re-opened on the fifth of September in 1950. Classes could not be held in the L'Abbe School for a few weeks because the work on its new foundation was not completed. Sister M.



Belle Valley School – Mearns. Back row L to R: Henry Leblanc, Denis Lirondelle, Billy Laurence, Albert Poltorak, Vic Leblanc, Fernand Gibeau, Eugene Gibeau. Third row L to R: Alex Krywko, Johanna Kluthe, Louise Altmiks, Shirley Lirondelle, Angeline Poltorak, Sophie Poltorak, Betty Kluthe, June Golden, Laurent Durand. Second row L to R: Louise Sheehan, Lorraine Boisvert, Joyce Boddez, Rhea Bourbonnais, Evelyn Boddez, Marge Boddez, Annette Lirondelle, Madeline Sabourin, Eileen Muller. Front row L to R: Ed Krywko, Richard Nobert, ... Donald Bourbonnais, Mathias Sabourin, Albert Leblanc



1950 Senior Class
Front row L to R: Lawrence Kluthe, Leo Falls, Victor Boddez, Annette Boisvert, Louise Boisvert. Second row L to R: Lucy Kluthe, Bernice O'Neill, Alice Altmiks, Norman Brenneis, Evelyn Sheehan. Third row L to R: Doris Hermanutz, Yvonne Sabourin, Paul Sabourin, Eugenie DeRudder. Back row L to R: Oscar Brenneis, Evelyn Lesburg

Henrita taught grades one to three and had 40 pupils, Sister M. Edward taught grades four to six and she had 36 pupils, Sister M. Clarice taught

grades seven to ten and had 25 pupils. Sisters Edward and Clarice staggered their classes until the L'Abbe building foundation was completed.



1950-51 Grades 1-2-3 class. Back row L to R: Raymond Durand, John Krywko, Denis Vandenhouten, Charles Pelletier, Daniel Pelletier, Simon Houle, Phillip DeRudder, Lionel Durand, Don Boddez, Lawrence (Bob) Lirondelle, Leonard Nobert, Richard Vandenhouten. Third row: Geraldine Logan, Vera Brenneis, Marie Krywko, Dorothy Altmiks, Darlene Lirondelle, Mary Rose LeBlanc, Sharon Borle, Lorraine Boisvert, Priscilla Logan, Elizabeth Polakovits, Caroline Massie, Juliette Houle. Second row: Madeleine Vandenhouten, Pauline Boisvert, Margaret Sabourin, Lucille Nobert, Maureen Sheehan, Denise Boisvert, Mary Polakovits, Shirley Wulff, Dorothy Muller, Lillian Altmiks. Front row: Willie Kluthe, Rene Boddez, Edgar Boddez, Roger Bourbonnais



1951-52 Grades 1-2-3. Back row L to R: Rene Boddez, Raymond Perrott, John Krywko, Charles Pelletier, Dennis Vandenhouten, Lionel Durand, Daniel Pelletier, Lawrence Lirondelle, Willie Kluthe, Leonard Nobert, Raymond Durand, Richard Vandenhouten. Third row L to R: Arthur Leblanc, Geraldine Logan, Lucille Nobert, Marie Krywko, Priscilla Logan, Sharon Borle, Shirley Wulff, Juliette Houle, Lillian Altmiks, Suzanne Bernard, Terry Cunningham. Second row L to R: Claire Nobert, Sharon Ellett, Mary Polakovits, Maureen Sheehan, Denise Boisvert, Madeleine Vandenhouten, Margaret Sabourin, Marlene Wills, Doris Bourbonnais. Front row L to R: Mathias Sabourin, Michael Wills, Joe VanHove, Jim Krywko, ... Melvin Verhulst, David Logan, Richard Beaupre, Dennis Fitzgerald, Marcel Boddez, Alan Muller



St. Charles School. Back row L to R: Doris Lirondelle, Annette Lirondelle, Lawrence Durand, Denis Lirondelle, Eugene Gibeau, Alex Krywko, Simon Houle, Richard Nobert. Middle row L to R: Roger Bourbonnais, Donald Boddez, Phillip DeRudder, Ernie Wulff, Eddie Krywko, Thelma Massie, Caroline Massie, Elizabeth Polakovits, Eileen Muller, Pauline Boisvert. Front row L to R: Joyce Boddez, Rhea Bourbonnais, Estelle Gibeau, June Golden, Dorothy Muller, Dorothy Altmiks, Darlene Lirondelle, Marie-Rose Leblanc



1950-51 Senior Class. Back row L to R: George Kluthe, Leo Falls, John Altmiks, George VanHove, Jack Massie, Raymond Golden, Norman Brenneis, Fernand Gibeau, Lawrence Kluthe, Paul Sabourin. Middle row L to R: Bernice O'Neill, Ida Vanhove, Lucy Kluthe, Mildred Ellett, Doris Hermanutz, Evelyn Sheehan, Alice Altmiks. Front row L to R: Conrad Bourbonnais, Maurice Gibeau, Louise Bosivert, Verda Williams, Rita Sabourin, Marie VanHove, Eugenie Derudder, Victor Boddez, Raymond Muller

The 1951-1952 School Year

Classes resumed September 4th, 1951. Sister M. Clarice taught 32 students in grades seven to eleven, Sister M. Edward taught 36 students in grades four to six, Sister M. Henrita taught 45 students in grades one to three.

During November the local board constructed a skating rink on the school grounds. This rink provided many hours of entertainment and exercise for the students.

During three weeks in November and again after Christmas, student teachers were sent to St. Charles for their practice teaching. Each class took part in an enterprise unit for two weeks. On the last day the student teachers were at the school, everyone attended the celebration to mark the end of these units.

There had always been difficulty in heating the two-room school and a complaint was read at the ratepayers meeting in February. As a result, the school was insulated during the month of March. Unfortunately, many birds, bees, and mice took possession at this time because the insulating holes had been left uncovered.

The pupils celebrated the last day of school in June with a picnic on the school grounds.

The 1952-1953 School Year

On August 12, 1952 the Springfield School was

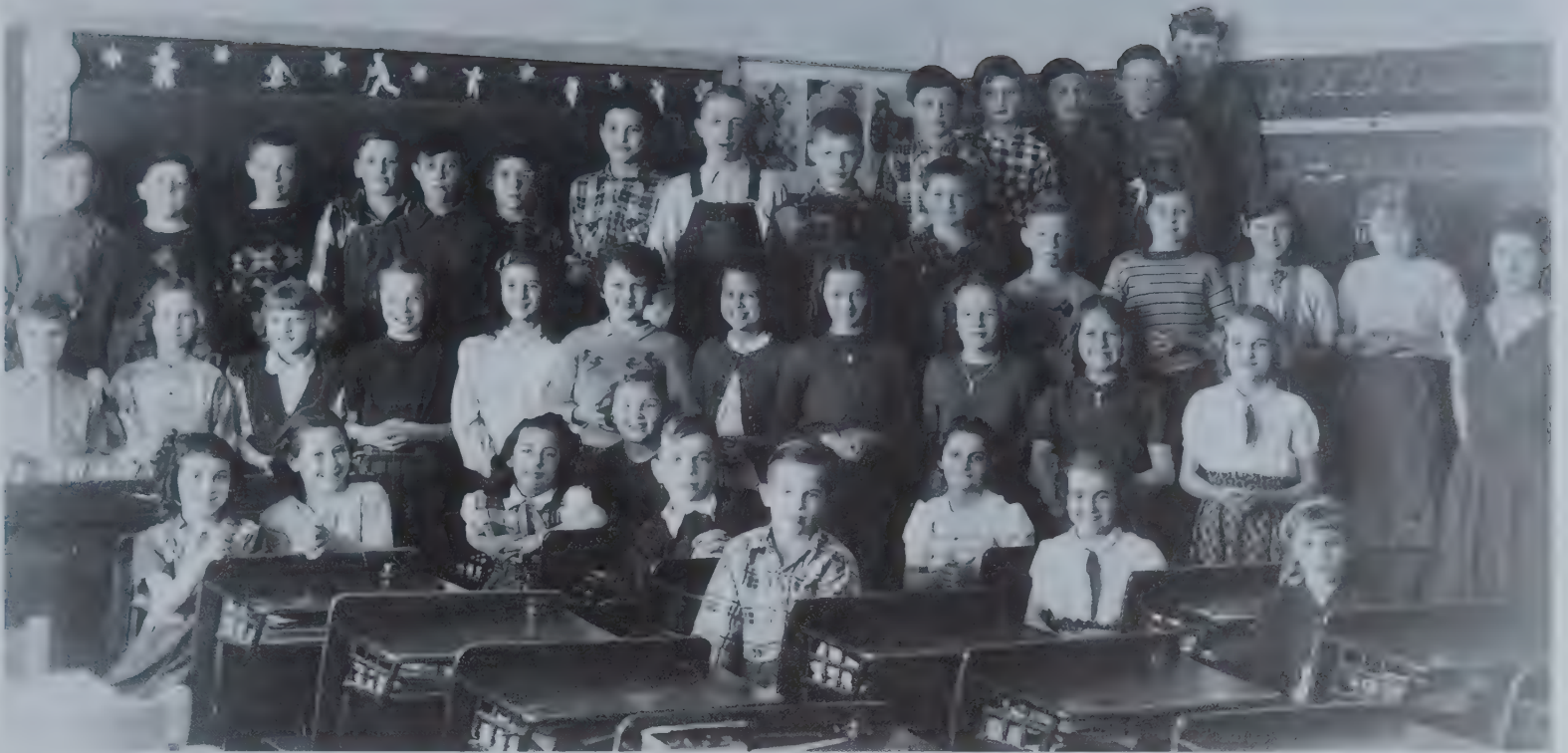
moved to Mearns and placed quite close to the L'Abbe School. This was a fine one-room building finished in white California stucco. Mr. J. L'Heureux was hired as teacher for this fourth room. He taught a portion of the French classes and a few high school subjects. Classes started on September 2nd in 1952.

Sister M. Clarice taught 16 students in grades nine to eleven, Mr. J. L'Heureux taught 21 students in grades six to eight, Sister M. Edward taught 41 students in grades three to five and Sister M. Henrita taught grades one and two.

Sadly, on January 8, 1953 the Springfield School burned down. Mr. L'Heureux had taken over the role of janitor for the term and on this day he had made fires to heat the classes as he had been doing all term. A defect, possibly in the chimney, caused the building to become overheated. Unfortunately, this fact was discovered too late and the school burned completely before anything could be saved. The students were sent home early this day. To replace the school that had burned a small building was brought to the site. This building had originally been an egg-grading station at Gibbons. Various second-hand desks were collected and classes resumed once again. In 1953 electric power was provided for the classrooms. This made it possible for the teachers to use conveniences like a radio, a film projector and later, a television.



1952 Grades 1-2. Back row L to R: Richard Vandenhouten, Raymond Perrott, Raymond Durand, Jim Krywko, Herman Kluthe, Richard Beaupre, Joe VanHove, Melvin Verhulst, David Logan, Vernon Verhulst, Michael Wills, Allen Muller, Gerald Perrott. Middle row L to R: Norman Vandenhouten, Sharon Ellett, Paul Bourbonnais, Mathias Sabourin, Marlene Wills, Arthur Leblanc, Doris Bourbonnais, Dennis Fitzgerald, Geraldine Logan, Terry Cunningham, Marjorie Krywko, Marcel Boddez. Front row, L to R: Janet Sheehan, Yvonne Pelletier, Lorraine Ricard, Claire Nobert, Gail Rowatt



Ruth Armstrong with the 1954-55, Grade 4, 5, 6 class. Seated, L to R: Denise Boisvert, Madeleine Vandenhouten, Shirley Wulff, Maureen Sheehan, Willie Kluthe, Edgar Boddez, Lucille Nobert, Mary Polakovits, Margaret Sabourin, Second row: Vera Brenneis, Dorothy Muller, Marie Krywko, Priscella Logan, Marie Rose LeBlanc, Sharon Borle, Darlene Lirondelle, Dorothy Altmiks, Thelma Massie, Carolyn Massie, Elizabeth Polakovits. Third row: John Krywko, Roger Bourbonnais, Don Boddez, Ernie Wulff, Lawrence (Bob) Lirondelle, Charles (Chuck) Pelletier, Simon Houle, Laurent Durand, Daniel Pelletier, Denis Vandenhouten, Rene Boddez, Pauline Boisvert, Juliette Houle, Lillian Altmiks, Ms. Ruth Armstrong. Back Rt. Corner: ... , Leonard Nobert, Lionel Durand, Ron Perrott, George Houle



Mr. L'Heureux's 1952/53 Class (Grades 6-8). Back row L to R: Alex Krywko, Albert Leblanc, Dennis Lirondelle, Edward Krywko, Mr. L'Heureux. Middle row L to R: Lionel Sabourin, Donald Bourbonnais, Richard Nobert, Joyce Boddez, Doris Lirondelle, Sophia Poltorak, Shirley Lirondelle, Annette Lirondelle, Rhea Bourbonnais, Betty Kluthe, June Golden, Eileen Muller. Front row L to R: Evelyn Boddez, Madeleine Sabourin, Johanna Kluthe, Lorraine Boisvert



Mrs. Perreault's 1954/55 Class (Grades 4-6). Back row L to R: Willie Kluthe, Lawrence Lirondelle, Daniel Pelletier, Allan Leclercq, Lionel Durand, Mrs. Elsie Perreault. Middle row L to R: Terry Cunningham, Dennis Fitzgerald, Joe VanHove, Lucille Nobert, Lillian Altmiks, Shirley Wulff, Michael Wills, Allen Muller, Marcel Boddez. Front row L to R: John Krywko, Doris Bourbonnais, Sharon Ellett, Geraldine Logan, Mary Polakovits, Margaret Sabourin, Jim Krywko



Sr. Francella's 1954-55 class (Grades 1-3) on the church steps. Back row, L to R: Monty Junck, Lucien Bugnet, Patrick Durand, Raymond Durand, Richard Vandenhouten, Herman Kluthe, Vernon Verhulst, Mathias Sabourin. Third row: Esther Wulff, Louise Verhulst, Frances Massie, Marjorie Krywko, Marlene Wills, Yvonne Pelletier, Claire Nobert, Jean Dumont, Simonne Sabourin, Doreen Logan. Second row: Janet Nobert, Janet Sheehan, Lorette Pelletier, Lorraine Ricard, Eileen Cunningham, Katherine Krywko, Yvonne Bugnet, Adele Ricard. Front row: Arthur LeBlanc, Paul Bourbonnais, Edward Short, Adrian Boddez, Albert Cloutier, Larry Perrott, Norman Vandenhouten, Wayne Brenneis, Robert LeBlanc, Lloyd Golden, Robert Altmiks



The schools, playground, convent, church & rectory in the 1960s. The skating rink awaits the winter ice



Class of 1954 on church steps. Back row L to R: Edgar Boddez, Charles Pelletier, Richard Nobert, Ernie Wulff, Donald Boddez, Leonard Nobert, Roger Bourbonnais. Middle row L to R: Carolyn Massie, Priscilla Logan, Evelyn Boddez, Darlene Lirondelle, Sharon Borle, Dorothy Altmiks, Sophie Poltorak, Annette Lirondelle, Mary Rose Leblanc. Front row L to R: Madeleine Vandenhouten, Marie Krywko, Dorothy Muller, Pauline Boisvert, Thelma Massie, Elizabeth Polakovits, Juliette Houle, Maureen Sheehan, Denise Boisvert

The Years from 1953-1969

In the fall of 1956 approval was given to dispose of the unused school barn at St. Charles as, by this time, practically all students attending the school came by school bus. As enrollment and the direction education was taking changed, decisions were made with regard to what grades were taught at St. Charles. Eventually the older grades were transported to Riviere Qui Barre.

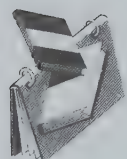
The original Belle Valley School was torn down in 1954 to be replaced by another new two-roomed school. The new school was an attractive structure with a large entrance, a coatroom that eventually was turned into a library. A wide flight of stairs led to two large classrooms and two small rooms. These smaller rooms served many purposes through the years, including typing room, staff room, teachers' workroom and resource room. A full basement

provided space for washrooms, cloakroom, lunchroom, occasional classes and many hours of indoor recesses during bad weather. In 1966 the L'Abbe School, our little red brick schoolhouse, was torn down.

The smallest enrollment St. Charles School ever had was 50 students in 1968 and the largest enrollment was 119 students in 1953.

An extremely sad day in the life of St. Charles' students was the last day of school in June of 1969. The school in Mearns was closed and the next fall all classes were centralized at Riviere Qui Barre. The main building of the school was sold to the community. It then was used as a community hall to replace the church basement that had formerly been the center for social functions. The school building was eventually torn down.

SISTER ADELA'S CLASS 1959



Sister Adela's class 1959. Top row L to R: Claire Nobert, Eddy Short, Sister Adela, Paul Bourbonnais, Melvin Verhulst. Second row L to R: Joe VanHove, Simonne Sabourin, Frances Massie, Herman Kluthe. Third row L to R: Maurice Girard, Yvonne Pelletier, Raymond Durand, Michael Wills. Fourth row L to R: Louise Verhulst, Alan Leclercq, Vernon Verhulst, David Logan, Margaret Friedrich. Bottom row L to R: Lorraine Ricard, Yvonne Ringuette, Margaret Sabourin, Marlene Wills, Janet Sheehan



Grade 9 Home Economics Class, 1954-55. From L to R: Johanna Kluthe, Vivian Perrott, Marge Boddez, Shirley Lirondelle, Verda Williams, Betty Kluthe, Sally ... Rita Sabourin, Marie VanHove, Patsy Whitson, Barbara Gill, Madeline Sabourin, Florence Mills



1957-1958 – Junior High. Back row L to R: Alan Leclercq, Willie Kluthe, Remi Girard, Leonard Nobert, Edgar Boddez. Third row L to R: Geraldine Logan, ... , Sharon Ellett, ... , Margaret Sabourin, Lucille Nobert, Maureen Sheehan. Second row L to R: Denise Boisvert, Mary Polakovits, Madeleine Vandenhouten. Front row L to R: Terry Cunningham, Melvin Verhulst, Joe VanHove

Teachers at St. Charles

Based on a list obtained from the Department of Education, these are the teachers who instructed at St. Charles School. Some corrections were made using information submitted by Sister Petra Klotz, School Sisters of Notre Dame.

1948-49	1-4	Sister M. Henrita
	5-10	Sister M. Edward
Religion & French		Sister M. Clovis
1949-50	1-3	Sister M. Henrita
	4-6	Sister M. Edward
	7-10	Justine Hittinger
1950-51	1-3	Sister M. Henrita
	4-6	Sister M. Edward
	7-10	Sister M. Clarice
1951-52	1-3	Sister M. Henrita
	4-6	Sister M. Edward
	7-10	Sister M. Clarice
1952-53	1-2	Sister M. Henrita
	3-5	Sister M. Edward
	6-8	Mr. E. L'Heureux
	9-11	Sister M. Clarice
1953-54	1-2	Sister M. Francella
	3-5	Ruth Armstrong
		Simonne Sheehan
	6-8	Sister M. Edward
	9-11	Sister M. Clarice
1954-55	1-3	Sister M. Francella
	4-6	Mrs. Elsie Perreault
	7-8	Sister M. Agnesine
	9-11	Sister M. Clarice
1955-56	1-3	Sister M. Francella
	4-6	Sister M. Agnesine
	7-8	Sister M. Clarice
1956-57	1-3	Sister M. Francella
	4-6	Sister M. Petra
	7-8	Sister M. Clarice

1957-58	1-3	Sister M. Francella
	4-6	Sister M. Petra
	7-9	Sister M. Clarice
1958-59	1-3	Sister M. Gabriella
	4-6	Sister M. Petra
1959-60	1-3	Sister M. Gabriella
	4-6	Sister M. Petra
	7-9	Sister M. Adela
1960-61	1-3	Sister M. Francine
	4-6	Sister M. Petra
	7-9	Sister M. Adela
1961-62	1-3	Sister M. Francine
	4-6	Sister M. Petra
	7-9	Sister M. Adela
1962-63	1-2	Sister M. Charles Garnier
	3-4	Norbert Leibel
	4-6	Sister M. Petra
	7-9	Sister M. Adela
1963-64	1-2	Sister M. Charles Garnier
	3-4	Maureen Sheehan
	5-6	Sister M. Joanne
	7-9	Sister M. Damian
1964-65	1-2	Sister M. Bertha
	3-4	Mrs. Teresa Brenneis

5-6	Sister M. Joanne
7-9	Sister M. Damian
1965-66	1-2
	Sister M. Bertha
	3-4
	Mrs. Teresa Brenneis
	5-6
	Sister M. Andrene
	7-9
	Sister M. Damian
1966-67	1-2
	Sister M. Bertha
	3-4
	Sister M. Corinne
	5-6
	Sister M. Andrene
1967-68	1-2
	Sister M. Roberta
	3-4
	Sister M. Corinne
	5-6
	Sister M. Agnesine
1968-69	1-2
	Sister M. Williams
	3-4
	Sister M. Andre Hogan
	5-6
	Sister M. Agnesine
	7-9
	Sister M. Adela

Sisters who were missioned to Mearns as homemakers:

Sr. Julianne Boser (formerly Antonine)
 Sr. Fidelis Schulkowski
 Sr. Gerard Schmidbauer
 Sr. Anastasia Sieben
 Sr. Mary Ellen Volk
 Sr. Bernice Volk



Sister Clarice's highschool class in front of the 'brick school'

Back row L to R: Donald Bourbonnais, Marge Boddez, Alex Krywko, Ed Krywko, Louise Sheehan. Middle row L to R: Marie VanHove, June Golden, Vivian Perrott, Shirley Lirondelle, Betty Kluthe, Louise Altmiks, Verda Williams. Front row L to R: Eileen Muller, Johanna Kluthe, Rhea Bourbonnais, Lorraine Boisvert, Madeline Sabourin



1953 Senior Class. Back row L to R: Art Perrott, Conrad Bourbonnais, Victor Boddez, George Kluthe, Norman Brenneis, Raymond Golden, Vivian Perrott, Evelyn Sheehan, Alice Altmiks, Louise Boisvert, Louise Sheehan. Front row L to R: Marjorie Boddez, Rita Sabourin, Verda Williams, Marie VanHove, Louise Altmiks

The parish priests always played a big part in the life of the students at St. Charles. The following priests served St. Charles parish and school during the years that the school was open. Father Merchant (1940-53), Father Gregory Rijniers (1953-62), Father Volk (1962-64), Father Peet (1964-66), Father Rozmahel (1966-69), Father MacDougall (1969)

Sturgeon School District Superintendents from 1948-1969

R.J. Scott, August 1945 to August 1955 (This was his 2nd term) • J.F. Swan, September 1955 to August 1964 • A.E. Kunst, September 1964 to September 1970 • F.J. Robinson, October 1970 to November 1979.

(Information for this history has been collected from several sources, many unofficial in nature. Sister Petra Klotz of the School Sisters of Notre Dame provided much of the material. She contacted the archivist for their order and with the information she received, selected facts and information of interest. Excerpts were also taken from the book titled, "History of Sturgeon School Division". Violet Brenneis generously shared a school essay she had written on the history of St. Charles Parish. The Archdiocese of Edmonton's booklet titled 'Catholic Expansion Programme' also provided some background information.)

Students Who Attended St. Charles

Altmiks Bernadette, John, Lillian, Louise, Robert

Altmiks	Alice, Dorothy
Banack	Rosemarie, Thomas, Wayne
Beaupre	Richard
Beke	Francine, Lucien
Bernard	Suzanne
Biddiscombe	Katherine, Keith, Kenneth
Boddez	Dennis, Donna, Edgar, Evelyn, Gerard, Joseph, Joyce, Marjorie, Rita, Victor, Wayne
Boddez	Adrian, Donald, Marcel, Rene
Boddez	Brian, Janet
Boisvert	Annette, Denise, Lorraine, Louise, Marcel, Pauline
Borle	Sharon
Borle	Kim
Borle	Hazel
Bourbonnais	Donald, Dorice, Rhea
Bourbonnais	Conrad, Paul, Roger
Breland	Lyle
Brenneis	Darcie, Faye, JoAnne
Brenneis	Alan, Albert, Dawne, Violet
Brenneis	Norman, Oliver, Oscar, Vera
Brenneis	Carol, David, Dianne, Gloria, Gregory
Brenneis	Bernadette, Brian, Dale, Merle, Roy, Sandra, Wayne
Brenneis	Darrell, Donald, Eric, Gilbert, Glenn, Lorraine
Brenneis	Cindy, Myra, Neal
Bugnet	Denis, Lucien, Robert, Yvonne
Cardinal	Roger
Caron	Ernest

Chalifoux	Mona	Kuefler	Rickie, Valerie
Chatvaire	Claudette	Lawrence	Billy
Cloutier	Irene, Raymond	LeBlanc	Albert, Arthur, Henry, Jean Louie,
Cloutier	Albert, Annette, Donald, Laurette		Mary Blanche, Mary Rose, Robert,
Coleman	Ramona		Victor, Yvonne
Comeau	Alfred	Leclercq	Alan, Henry
Como	Adrienne	Leibel	Donna
Courtepatte	Sidney	Lesburg	Evelyn, Maurice
Cunningham	Eileen, Terry	Lirondelle	Annette, Darlene, Denis, Lawrence
Dejarlais	Linda		(Robert), Shirley
DeRudder	Eugenie, Phillip, Thomas	Lirondelle	Doris
DeRudder	Mary Anne, Morris, Walter	Logan	Bernice, David, Doreen, Geraldine,
DeRudder	Edward		Linda, Norman, Priscilla, Walter,
Devlin	Gail		Robert
Dufresne	Clem	Logan	Christopher
Dumont	Jean	Lutz	John, Kenny, Marie, Susan
Durand	Laurent, Lionel, Patrick, Raymond	Massie	Carolyn, Frances, Jack, Thelma
Dvernychuk	Daniel, David, Donald	McCawley	Patrick
Ellett	Mildred, Sharon	Muller	Allen, Dorothy, Raymond, Eileen
Falls	David, Dennis, Diane, Evelyn,	Nobert	Jocelyn, Laurier, Marc, Giselle
	Lorne, Maureen, Richard	Nobert	Claire, Gloria, Janet, Leonard,
Falls	Leo		Lucille, Richard
Falls	Katherine, Terrance	Nobert	Guy, Lorraine
Fitzgerald	Dennis	O'Neill	Bernice
Friedrich	Margaret	O'Neill	Reggie, Victoria
Gibeau	Estelle, Eugene, Fernand, Maurice	Pelletier	Daniel, Charles, Yvonne, Lorette,
Girard	Bernard, Joseph, Laurier, Maurice,		Betty Jean, Gordon
	Remi, Richard, Victor	Perras	Raymond
Golden	June, Lloyd, Raymond	Perrott	Arthur, Gerald, Gilbert, Larry,
Gravel	Kenneth		Raymond, Ronald, Vivian
Halle	Francis, Maria Lou	Polakovits	Elizabeth, John, Mary
Hermanutz	Brian, Gail, Sandra, Valerie	Poltorak	Albert, Angeline, Martin, Sophia
Hermanutz	Doris	Potvin	Elizabeth, Maurice
Hittinger	Bernard, Donald, Irene, Mary	Prowse	Belinda, Harlie, Laverne
	Lynn	Ricard	Lorraine, Adele, JoAnne, Dolores,
Houle	George, Juliette, Simon		Guy, James
Hughes	David	Ringuette	Omer, Yvonne
Junck	Monty	Rowan	Gail
Kerckhof	Andre, Anna Marie, Godelieve,	Sabourin	Lionel, Lucille, Madeleine,
	Jozef, Maria		Marguerite, Mathias, Paul, Rita,
Kerr	Ann, Keran		Simone, Yvonne
Kieser	Claire, Gordon, Joyce, Marlene,	Schafers	Deborah, Frank, Gene, Marie,
	Ronny		Ruth
Kluthe	Betty, Herman, John Norman,	Sheehan	Maureen, Janet, Judy, Rita,
	Lawrence, Marilyn, Rose Marie,		Catherine
	William	Sheehan	Danny, Darrell, James, Joan, Mary
Kluthe	George, Johanna, Lucy	Sheehan	Evelyn, Louise
Kluthe	Christopher, Janet, Judy, Kevin	Short	Edward, Gary, Shirley
Kluthe	Barbara, Brian, David, Deborah,	Stevens	John
	Gordon, Harold, Larry, Rita	Sylvestre	Ralph
Kluthe	David	Tellier	Denise, Leon, Mariette, Paul,
Krywko	Alex, Edward, James, Katherine,		Rachel, Roger, Rollande
	Marie, Marjorie, John	Vandenhouten	Carmen, Denis, Irene, Laura,
Kuefler	Brenda, Diane, Gary, Morris,		Madelain, Norman, Paul, Richard,
	Warren, Wendy, Wesley		Roger, Simmone, Vivian

Vandermuelen	Edna, Jeanette
VanHove	George, Ida, Joseph, Marie, Moses
Verhulst	Doreen, Elaine, Gary, Jeanette, Lorette, Louise, Melvin, Vernon
Warshawski	Betty, Katherine, Linda, Rose Marie
Williams	Verda
Wills	Marlene, Michael
Woods	Brent, Dwight
Wozney	Richard
Wulff	Ernie
Wulff	Dianne, Esther, Linda, Shirley
Zalischuk	Albert

Mearns & Area Bus Drivers

By Oliver Brenneis

In 1947-48 Vic Perras transported the students to St. Charles school in Mearns in a one-ton truck with a tarp for a cover. After Mr. Perras, Eddie Verhulst became a school bus driver and picked up the Egg Lake area students. Dan Sheehan drove the second school bus, which picked up the southern students, the Belle Valley and Tellier School District kids.



Dan Sheehan's Fargo School Van. In the summer months Dan would remove some of the seats, add a card table and propane stove and voila! A motorhome.



Yvonne, Robert & Lucien Bugnet by their father Maurice's school bus.

Maurice Bugnet then took over Eddie Verhulst's route and Alex Brenneis later bought the route from Dan Sheehan. John Polakovits drove Alex Brenneis' bus and Oliver Brenneis started driving the Alcomdale area bus for Alex in 1966 until 1975 when Oliver bought his own bus and began driving the students to Riviere Qui Barre. Oliver is still driving bus after 40 years for the RQB area students.

The School Sisters of Notre Dame

The Congregation of the School Sisters of Notre Dame was founded in Bavaria by Blessed Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger in 1833. The purpose of the congregation was to educate girls from poor families who could not afford to go to school. In 1847 the Sisters came to America to provide education for the children of the German immigrants. In 1871 an invitation to take charge of the orphanage in St. Agatha, Ontario brought the Sisters to Canada. In 1927 the first convent school in western Canada opened in Leipzig, Saskatchewan.



Notre Dame Academy
WATERDOWN, ONTARIO

December 10, 1974

Dear Mrs. Ricard,

Here is a voice from the far east. To remember it you will have to think back some 25 years and recall the time when our Sisters first came to Mearns in 1948.

It does not seem that long since I, Sister Mary Edward, first set foot in that little place. We lived in the parish house until the convent was ready and travelled to Egg Lake school until Belle Valley school finally rolled in. Good Father Merchant and the people of Mearns certainly worked hard and demanded their rights. He and Mother M. Plus who brought us there have gone to their reward. Those were days of adventure and some hardships. However, I have fond memories of those six years and am so glad I had the opportunity of working among people like you. Your little girls were too young to be in school when I was there but I remember them as small cherubs, also the Sheehans. It was great to hear that your Lorraine and Janet helped to teach religion.

I have here a few tapes. You will remember that Sister Mary William asked several people to say a few words about the Sisters coming to Mearns. Last year we Sisters collected information about the beginning and growth of each of our missions. I chose Mearns since I was one of the pioneers. I am writing now to thank you for speaking on the tape. Hearing your voices again was next best to meeting you and it was a real joy for me to hear those many voices that I knew so well.

May God bless you in a special way, Mrs. Ricard, and grant you Christmas Peace and happiness!

Sincerely in Notre Dame,

Sister Clara

P.S. Several years ago many of us chose to return to our baptismal names. Now I am called Sister Clara Ruth instead of Sister Mary Edward.

Letter from Sister Mary Edward – 1974

Mearns was the SSND mission in Alberta. When the government of Alberta decided to close smaller schools and centralize them into one school, the three schools in the area of Mearns were affected by this decision. Since the majority of pupils were Catholic, the pastor, Fr. Merchant, and the parishioners were eager to have Sisters teach in this amalgamated school. In August 1948 three School Sisters of Notre Dame came to Mearns. This was the beginning of a deep and lasting association with the people of Mearns. Many heartwarming and interesting anecdotes are recounted in the records of the 27 years of SSNDs in Mearns.

Sister Adela Folick who was in Mearns from 1957 to 1962 has these fond memories.

"It was a pleasure working with the people in Mearns. They loved the Sisters and had a great respect for them. The women were generous in helping out and the men did many odd jobs around the convent and school. They showed affection and were always there when needed. On Christmas Day the families would bring their children and spend time with the Sisters. On Halloween the children would sing Halloween songs to entertain the Sisters. The children were wonderful to teach; so eager and enthusiastic to learn. They were exceptional in their ability to write very interesting and imaginative stories, making them come alive."



Sister Petra Klotz and Sister Adela Folick in front of the Mearns convent – July 1963



Sister Katharine (Damien) Reiter (1963-1966)

S. Petra Klotz recalls that, although she taught multi-grades from 1956 to 1963, she considers these years as the most cherished of her teaching career. Long winter days were brightened as the Sisters would skate with the children on the rink. She, too, remembers the friendly chats of villagers around the kitchen table. These

heartfelt sentiments are those of the 35 Sisters who lived or taught in Mearns from 1948 to 1975. The solid faith, generosity and kindness of the people in Mearns enriched the lives of the Sisters and contributed to the growth and maturing of the entire Canadian Province of the School Sisters of Notre Dame.



Farewell party for the Sisters of Mearns – 1976. L to R: Sr. André, Sr. Mary Joseph and Sr. Rose

Seven Years of Bliss

By S. Petra Klotz

Although teaching has its ups and downs, my experience at St. Charles School in Mearns was mostly a very pleasant and uplifting one. I believe

this was so because of the rural setting and “countryside” mentality of the families who lived in the area. I could very much relate to this atmosphere because I myself am a “country girl”.

During the first few years I taught in the two-room yellow school close to the convent. Later, when the enrolment increased, a portable was moved in and my pupils and I took up residence there. The intermediate grades, 4,5,6 were my responsibility for the greater part of the seven years. I had a great system organized for teaching the three grades. When one grade was taken from me I complained to the Superintendent. For him that was a first, usually teachers complained when a grade was added. For the most part the students were receptive, enthusiastic and eager to learn... with the added bonus of parents who were interested and co-operative. This eagerness of the pupils was demonstrated early in the day; arriving from the bus many of them would sit down and begin the work I had outlined for the day; this gave them the opportunity to read or complete some other tasks.

Group activities seemed to be very special for myself, and the students. Several groups were formed, leaders for each were chosen by a democratic process of election, so much so that one Superintendent commented, “If our government elections were run this way, there would be no problems”. The main purpose of the groups was to initiate and complete projects, be it in Religion, Science or Social Studies. The students not only became more knowledgeable in these various subjects but also in co-operation, responsibility and relationships. Instilling these characteristics is very much a part of a person’s educational development.

Mathematical drills, principally multiplication, formed a part of each day’s activities. With pointer in hand I loved going around the circle; each student tried to keep up with the pointer; most of them did, at least in due time. Education and learning wasn’t only reading, writing and arithmetic. The training of the singing voice was also important. It was a delight to listen to the students harmonizing in three “voices”. Many of these same “voices” praised our God during the Sunday celebration of Holy Mass. Another skill developed was dramatization. I remember when the students enacted all the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary. The back of the classroom became the stage, the “French Room” served as dressing room, and the rest of the classroom provided seating room for the spectators. I recall being so proud of the actors as they made the “Mysteries” come alive.

I cannot bring this article to a close without mentioning the “Rainbow Drill”. How those girls

practiced the waltz step until it was perfect, each in time with the others; how the pianist’s fingers moved in accurate timing. Mothers too became involved as they “created” beautiful crepe paper dresses, each of a different rainbow shade. The final result was truly impressive, very much “rainbow style”. The girls had done well.

Yes, my years in Mearns were blessed in so many ways... the community, the staff, the Superintendents, but most of all, the students, were the source of this “blessedness” and I am forever grateful.

Remembering St. Charles School in the 1950s

You were there if you can remember:

- Sitting on those little benches outside the skating rink and lacing up our skates
- Cod liver oil pills and polio vaccine distributed on sugar cubes
- The Science cupboard filled with Bunsen burners, magnets and mercury. We actually played with that hazardous material!
- Halloween parties and dunking for apples
- The prestige of being a bus patrol (sometimes with a year end banquet in the city)
- The sound of the hand wrung recess bell
- The red and green paper chains we made for the Christmas trees
- Our library corner in the L’Abbe School with its glass doored cabinet
- Listening to the teacher teaching one of the other classes in a 3-class room
- Publishing our own St.Charles Times. It was first printed using the gelatinous Hectograph and later we used the Gestetner. Both were very messy operations.
- The cloakrooms with everyone having their own hook and shelf space
- Christmas concerts and all their preparation
- Talent shows in the church basements
- Memory work
- Playing ‘scrub’ at noon hour and Phys Ed
- The Alberta Farm Safety contests and the Canada Commonwealth Essay Contest won by some St. Charles’ students
- Track meets
- Long bus rides and getting stuck in the snow
- Wearing kerchiefs, bobby socks, crinolines, hoops, garter belts with long stockings and pull-on overshoes
- The ‘strap’
- Skating at lunch hour and playing ‘crack the whip’ and the three man train
- Sister Clarice letting her students listen to ball games on the radio

- Collecting pennies for the Holy Childhood Association and looking forward to its' magazine, The Little Messenger
- Praying for the souls of little 'pagan' kids in far away countries. Our prayers must have worked because they are our priests today!
- Getting to place a piece of straw in the Christmas manger at Christmas for every good deed we performed
- The visits from the School Inspector and how we were reminded to be on our best behavior
- Recess games such as marbles, pump-pump pull away, fox and goose, dodge ball, hop scotch and skip rope
- Making friezes in Social Studies of Indian and Eskimo villages, using flour and water for paste to do the geography and bits of fur and material to dress the clothes pin people
- Walls lined with murals depicting current topics
- Listening to Current Events on CKUA radio as part of Social Studies
- Jiving to 45 rpm records of rock and roll tunes at noon hour in the school basement
- Practicing for hours for Music Festivals and coming home with ribbons for our effort. Can you remember all the words to Happy Wanderer?"
- The rhythm band outfits (capes and pillbox hats) and having to play sticks while other lucky kids got the triangles or the tambourine
- Starting the school day with the 'Our Father' and the songs 'All Salute the Red, White and Blue' or 'God Save the Queen'
- Dancing during Phys Ed. to those old 33½ rpm records. Folk dances like Put your Little Foot, Irish Washerwoman and the Heel Toe Polka. Square dances like Little Brown Jug and Red River Valley
- Getting drinking water from the big brown crock in paper cone cups
- Sayings from the Sisters like 'keep on keeping on' and 'only your best is good enough'
- Choir parties
- The swings and teeter totters and learning to take turns
- Invoking the help of Jesus, Mary and Joseph by writing 'J.M.J.' on the top corner of each exam paper
- First Fridays when the buses picked students up a little earlier so we could go to Mass before school
- Year end picnic with girls playing softball against the moms and boys playing baseball against the dads
- And if you were one of the lucky ones, you will remember getting together again at the school reunion in 2004 to relive those old times

These school memories also evoke other memories such as:

- Sitting in the same pews every Sunday at church
- Wearing hats to church and getting new ones at Easter. Remember those little feather hats like headbands?
- Telephone party lines and rubbernecking
- Movies in church basement brought by Father Pratt. Boy's Town, Our Lady of Fatima, Hopalong Cassidy

St. Charles School Reunion, 2004

A reunion of students who attended St. Charles School was held in Mearns in August of 2004. Approximately 347 people gathered to remember, rekindle old friendships, laugh and celebrate. Of these, 182 were former students. The remainder were spouses and former teachers.

The idea to have a reunion began with Yvonne (Sabourin) Kluthe and Rachel (Tellier) Horvath. A few phone calls were made and much interest was shown. This was in January 2003. The real work then began in earnest.

Committees were formed. Meetings were held. Maureen (Sheehan) Slecicka chaired the reunion committee. Terry Cunningham was asked to handle finances. Among some of the committee members were Rita (Sabourin) Soetaert, Claire (Kieser) Stitsen, Leonard Nobert, Lawrence Lirondelle, Janet (Sheehan) Boddez, Yvonne (Sabourin) Kluthe, Kathy (Biddiscombe) Sandmeirer, Janet (Nobert) Macdonald. They began the task finding funds through government grants, sponsors and donors. There were permits to be secured and invitations to be sent. A grounds crew headed by Lawrence Lirondelle and Gene Schafers began preparation of the grounds. Leonard Nobert provided a new roof for the old concession booth. Others were responsible for making a program for the evening that included entertainment. Tents, tables and chairs (and patio heaters) had to be found. A display committee began gathering photos and info for a display tent. Another group took care of food and beverage needs. Therese Ricard was an invaluable source of information and answered many, many questions about people from Mearns and even brought coffee to the guys working on the grounds.

Maureen was able to obtain a copy of the St. Charles School registry from Alberta Learning. It contained the name of every student who attended St. Charles beginning in 1948 to 1967. There were 397 student names in the registry.

The committee, and especially Terry Cunningham, spent hours searching out the people who were difficult to locate. It was a considerable task. Terry then put all names and addresses into a database, which was maintained and kept up to date



Maureen (Sheehan) Sleccka and Therese Ricard, making the rounds

by Janet Macdonald who was in charge of the mail-outs. All but a dozen students were found.

On the weekend of the reunion Maureen Sleccka and Claire Stitsen acted as emcees. The program opened with the ringing of an old school bell followed by the assembly singing the hymn "Holy Ground". Maureen's opening remarks at the evening program were:

"We were the fortunate children whose parents wanted for us a Catholic education. Remember we are talking about pre-Vatican 2 times where people were almost paranoid about preserving their faith and that of their children. Our parents and Father Merchant had the foresight to ask for the School Sisters of Notre Dame to come west to teach us and thus came into our lives a group of women whose life work was to teach. They had no other distractions but us. And teach they did! They made us work and the operative work here is 'work'. These women were serious about teaching us and we were blessed to have had them in our lives."



Oliver Brenneis, Fr. Jan, Sr. Andrene, Claire Stitsen, Sr. Adela, Sr. Petra, Tony Stitsen

Sister Petra, Sister Andrene and Sister Damien, three of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, came from Ontario to attend the reunion. They stayed at Tony and Claire Stitsen's Bed & Breakfast. Sisters who were unable to be there due to age sent letters that were shared.

Sr. Petra Klotz's thoughts after attending the Reunion

Who would have thought that after 41 years I would have the opportunity to return to the most cherished spot of my teaching career? I spent seven wonderful years in this LITTLE hamlet, teaching the middle grades. It was and is an isolated place but the people did and continue to make it very alive.

Some 300 teachers and former students crowded in on the area where once the two small schools were located. Tents, campers, cars, all in organized array. It was wonderful to see and experience. Hunger, thirst and other physical needs were well tended to.

Former students (most of whom are grandparents now) spoke so highly of the Sisters who had taught them. Their teaching did not focus only on the subjects on the curriculum but also, and mainly, on the values of Christian living, which they carried into the future. On my part I spoke of the spirituality, the eagerness and the groundedness of the people in this small community.

Our convent home remains... more lovely than ever. We were given the opportunity to tour. Several families have lived in it through the years but the family in it now has been there for 21 years. They have given that home a new look even the basement is used for living quarters.

The highlight of the entire weekend was the celebration of the Eucharist in the tiny church. Yes, it still stands in all its majestic beauty and is still used faithfully each Sunday.

Father was delighted with the large congregation the church was packed. The church echoed as members of both old and new choirs praised God with traditional and modern hymns.

The most touching part was the "light service" at the end of the Mass to honour and remember those students and teachers who were celebrating with us in heavenly glory. It was hard to hold back the tears, especially as the name of each deceased Sister who had lived in Mearns was called and a candle placed before the altar.

I am deeply grateful for having had this opportunity to touch in again, to see my former students (who are much older and wiser now) and especially to hear first hand the appreciation for the presence of the Sisters in the school and community.

As I said to the crowd gathered and I say it again: 'It's wonderful to be back on this hallowed spot.' AND SO IT WAS!

Former lay teachers also attended the reunion: Justine Hittinger (now Hergott), Ruth Armstrong (now Robinson), Simonne Sheehan, Norbert Leibel, and Maureen (Sheehan) Sleccka. Besides Maureen

and Claire sharing their memories of St. Charles School, other speakers included Sister Petra Klotz and Justine Hittinger Hergot.

Excerpts from Justine Hittinger's address to St. Charles School Reunion

During the summer of 1949 I got a phone call from Father Merchant, telling me they were attending a meeting, and wanted to see me afterward. I quote "It will be late maybe even midnight, but don't go to bed". That was all he said and I promised to stay up. I had a hunch it might be something to do with teaching. About midnight the door bell rang and in came Father Merchant, Pete Sheehan, and Moise Comeau. My hunch was right! Father Merchant had resurrected three nuns from Ontario of the SSND order, a convent was being built, 2 schools were being hauled, all this to take place in Mearns, with the new school to be called St. Charles.

When I reported for duty the first day of the school, I had no school. The L'Abbe School had not been hauled in yet! So I was sent home, waiting for the time when my school would be available. So I had 3 weeks pay for doing nothing! Not bad, but the crunch was to make up for those 3 weeks. After all, it was still the rule that only the Departmentals counted. I must have had more drive in those days than I do now, as we did complete the entire course, and I'm quite sure all my grade 9's passed.

You might think that staying at the Convent with the Sisters was a lonely life for me, but far from it. I really enjoyed their company, and sometimes Sister Antonine and Sister Henrita and I would go to school in the evenings. I'd play the piano. They had beautiful voices and we'd sing together popular songs like "I Love Those Dear Hearts and Gentle People", etc. We had some pretty good harmony.

As at that time the SSND order never ate their meals with the laity, Father Merchant and I ate together in a little dining room. How wonderful to eat blessed food all year! By the way, Sister Antonine was a very good cook and housekeeper, a very happy and devoted person. There was only one meal that Father and I didn't enjoy. I'm sure Sister Antonine worked very hard to make the pastry for the birds nest with an egg in it. We contemplated how we'd get rid of it. Father Merchant was a heavy smoker and he had his tin of tobacco with him, which was nearly empty. He suggested putting those nests into the can, and he'd throw the can out. But I said "Suppose they find the can?" Anyway that was what we did. There was plenty of other food so we didn't leave the table hungry. Another desirable feature of staying at the Convent was daily Mass.

My classes at St. Charles seemed to me the average challenge. I enjoyed my class and hoped they enjoyed me. But lo and behold, a few years later Lawrence Kluthe was talking to some of my nephews and nieces telling them they had run out several teachers before and hoped to do the same with me! Tell me this is only a made up story for fun. I didn't have a clue of this happening and you would think I should have known. He also said that I'd expect 80% on tests I'd give them. This is true, especially in Math. I'd offer extra help if anyone needed it as they'd have to rewrite a different exam. Lawrence said to them and I quote "We'd been happy before to make 50%, but she wanted 80%. We finally buckled down and learned."

I have nothing but happy memories of my teaching days.

Entertainment for the evening included musicians Gene Gibeau, Gerry Logan and others. Gene generously shared his equipment as well as talent as he set up the stage with microphones and speakers. Janet (Sheehan) Boddez put together a songbook for the reunion that included a hit song from each of the years that the school was open. On the cover of the songbook was a photo of the St. Charles Rhythm Band of 1951 and the title of the



Leading the sing-song on stage



"Joining in the singing" – Maureen (Sheehan) Slecza, Ellen Boddez, and Lucy Kluthe



Lucien Bugnet preparing the "Beef on a Bun" for the Saturday evening meal



"The Musicians"

book was "Still Got Rhythm". We proved we did as everyone sang along while Adrian Boddez played guitar.

The evening meal, beef on a bun accompanied by delicious salads, was catered by former student, Lucien Bugnet, who also provided brunch on Sunday morning after the Mass.

There was a concession booth for refreshments during the day and a display tent that held over 90 class photos and a chart for each year the school operated. The charts reminded us of the favorite movie of each year, favorite song, vehicles, fashions, etc. The day was all about memories.

A Mass was held Sunday morning and all the old choir members were invited for practice before Mass. Anyone who was in the choir that Sunday will tell you it was an emotional time. We sang in harmony the old hymns that we'd learned years ago. There were smiles and tears in the choir loft that morning. During Mass the 40 students of St. Charles who had passed away were remembered as well as former teachers. As each name was read a candle was lit for each of them. It was a solemn and sentimental ceremony as over 40 candles burned in their memory.

Money left over from the reunion was allocated as seed money for this history book.



Dining tent set up, with church and former convent in the background



Left to Right: Sr. Petra Klotz, Linda (Warshawski) Webb, Robert Altmiks, Lorette (Pelletier) Bruce, Janet (Nobert) Macdonald, Lucien Bugnet, Adele (Ricard) Auger, Larry Kluthe



Standing, L to R: Lucille (Sabourin) Turner, Yvonne (Bugnet) Byers, Doreen (Verhulst) White, Rosemary (Kluthe) Auger. Front: Maureen (Falls) Olsen, Judy (Sheehan) Victoor



Geraldine (Logan), Adrian Boddez, Claire (Nobert), Janet (Nobert)



Carol (Lirondelle), Lorette (Pelletier), Therese Ricard and Gordon Perrott



Rosemarie (Kluthe), Monty Junck, Judy (Sheehan)



Judy (Sheehan), Joe VanHove, Gloria (Nobert), Lucille (Sabourin), Yvonne (Bugnet), Rosemarie (Kluthe)



Enjoying the ball game, Lucille (Nobert) Heemeryck, Ewa Nobert, Sharon (Ellett) Musey



Lawrence Lirondelle and Daniel Pelletier



Eileen (Cunningham) Roy and Lorette (Pelletier) Bruce with entertainment & memorabilia tents in the background



Therese Ricard with her daughters Adele and JoAnne wearing their old Mearns softball uniforms



"Good Friends" – Raymond Durand and Paul Bourbonnais



Johanna (Kluthe) Brenneis, Michael Wills, Judy (Sheehan) Victoor, Marcel Boddez, Raymond Golden



Denise (Tellier), Gene Gibeau, and Rollande (Tellier)



"Old timers under the Big Top". Left side: Sister Petra and Norbert Leibel. Right side: Ludick & Pauline Banack, Therese Ricard and Elsie Leibel



Back Row: Louise (Verhulst), Simonne (Sabourin), Raymond Durand, Melvin Verhulst, Paul Bourbonnais, Michael Wills, Margaret (Friedrich). Front Row: Janet (Sheehan), Margaret (Sabourin), Yvonne (Ringuette), Claire (Nobert), Alan LeClerc

"Friends are quiet angels
who lift us to our feet
when our wings
have trouble
remembering how to fly."

GREAT TRUTHS THAT LITTLE CHILDREN HAVE LEARNED

- 1) No matter how hard you try, you can't baptize cats.
- 2) When your Mum is mad at your Dad, don't let her brush your hair.
- 3) If your sister hits you, don't hit her back. They always catch the second person.
- 4) Never ask your 3-year old brother to hold a tomato.
- 5) You can't trust dogs to watch your food.
- 6) Don't sneeze when someone is cutting your hair.
- 7) Never hold a Dust-Buster and a cat at the same time.
- 8) You can't hide a piece of broccoli in a glass of milk.
- 9) Don't wear polka-dot underwear under white shorts.
- 10) The best place to be when you're sad is Grandpa's lap.

GREAT TRUTHS THAT ADULTS HAVE LEARNED

- 1) Raising teenagers is like nailing jelly to a tree.
- 2) Wrinkles don't hurt.
- 3) Families are like fudge...mostly sweet, with a few nuts.
- 4) Today's mighty oak is just yesterday's nut that held its ground.
- 5) Laughing is good exercise. It's like jogging on the inside.
- 6) Middle age is when you choose your cereal for the fibre, not the toy.

GREAT TRUTHS ABOUT GROWING OLD

- 1) Growing old is mandatory; growing up is optional.
- 2) Forget the health food. I need all the preservatives I can get.
- 3) When you fall down, you wonder what else you can do while you're down there.
- 4) You're getting old when you get the same sensation from a rocking chair that you once got from a roller coaster.
- 5) It's frustrating when you know all the answers but nobody bothers to ask you the questions.
- 6) Time may be a great healer, but it's a lousy beautician.
- 7) Wisdom comes with age, but sometimes age comes alone.

Always remember to forget the troubles that pass your way;
BUT NEVER forget the blessings that come each day.

Community

Clubs & Organizations

Alcomdale 4-H Clubs

History from Decades of the Independence District (1981)

The earlier grain and calf clubs in Alberta for boys and girls were known as Junior Clubs. It was not until 1953-54 that they became known as the 4-H Clubs following the pattern of the United States clubs of 4-H: Head, Heart, Health and Hands.

The original Alcomdale clubs were organized under the District Agriculturist, Mr. Jean M. Fontaine. In 1953 he was given an assistant, Mr. Howard Fulcher. Through the years there were other



Richard Friedrich with his "high" spirited 4-H calf. He won first place locally for his calf

assistant DAs including Mr. Eric Horton and Mr. Frank Belyea.

In those earlier years the supervisor of the District Agriculturists was Mr. Fred Newcombe. The club work came under the Department of Agriculture and the supervisor was Mr. George Black. This position was later occupied by Mr. Les Usher.



Alcomdale Junior Beef 4-H Club – circa 1948

The first Alcomdale Junior Beef Club was in 1947-48 with the leaders Mr. Edgar Ellett and Mr. Paul Hermanutz. Mr. Ellett had been leader of the Riviere Qui Barre Club the previous year. The members of this first club were: Mary Arlow; Grant Ellett; Fred Cunningham; Keith and Mildred Ellett; Richard Friedrich; Betty, Joe and Helen Hermanutz; and John Polakovits. Keith Ellett was the efficiency winner that year.

There was a Junior Beef Calf Club in 1948-49 with the same leaders. The members were: Richard and Otto Friedrich; Jo, Helen and Betty Hermanutz; Bob MacDonald; Bob, Claire and Jack Massey; and John Polakovits.

An attempt was made to form a Calf Club in 1949-50 but it did not materialize.

The first record of a Junior Grain Club was in 1948 with the forming of a Barley Club. The members were: Alphonse Granger; George VanHove; Keith and Mildred Ellett; Stella Jaworski; Otto Friedrich; Grant Ellett; Rose Spargo; Lydia

Janke; Gordon Meakin; Lily and Mary Myers; Lucille Harrington; Ronald and Allister Sim; Bob, Jack, Donald and Claire Massey; Alfred, Joe and Helen Hermanutz; and Bob, Stanley and Allen MacDonald. Bob MacDonald was efficiency winner.

Then there was the Barley Club of 1951. The leader was Mr. Wm. Shewchuck (an Alcomdale school teacher). Sydney Meakin was the efficiency winner that year. The club members were: Richard and Otto Friedrich; Phyllis Jaworski; Fred Kennett; Mike and Steffie Kobiak; Stuart and Sydney Meakin; Walter and Hedy Mollenkopf; Ronald and Winnifred Sim; and Charles Rautio.

In 1953 there was a Junior Barley Club with Wm. Sime and Britton Mills as leaders. The members were: Henry Warunki; Richard Friedrich; Stuart and Sydney Meakin; Fred and Gloria Kennett; Ken Middleborough; Bruce Kennett; Florence Mills; Ronald and Winnifred Sim; and Marion and Doreen Mills.

There was an Oat Club in operation in 1953. The club leaders were Wm. Sime and Britton Mills. However, there was an early frost that ruined the grain crop for seed and showing purposes. An Oat Club formed in 1954 under the leadership of Wm. Sime did not get into operation.

There was a 4-H Beef Calf Club organized in the season of 1953-54 with Wm. Sime and B. Mills as leaders. The club members were: Bruce Kennett; Maxine Benson; Fred and Gloria Kennett; Florence and Lorna Mills; Barbara Gill; Bill Gonek; Stuart and Sydney Meakin; and Marion and Doreen Mills.

There was a club formed in 1954-55 with Britton Mills as leader. The Alcomdale 4-H Calf Club has been operating since 1953 to the present day, with the exception of two years. Britton Mills was club leader for thirteen years from 1953-65 and had been assistant leader for eleven years previous. Walter Kennett became leader and held that position until 1969. Leonard Whitson followed as leader for five years until 1974. Gordon Meakin, who had been a club member of the 1953-54 group, became leader succeeding L. Whitson and was leader until 1978. For the year 1978-79 Mrs. Alberta Fesyk began as a leader.

Every year the club had their own competitions at Alcomdale. Then they went on to compete against eight or ten Edmonton area clubs in Edmonton. Over the years some of the club members won honors at the Edmonton competitions.

1955 – Marion Mills – Reserve Grand Champion
1962 – Brian Whitson – Grand Champion
1968 – Janice Meakin – Grand Champion
1973 – Darcy Brenneis – Reserve Grand Champion



Terry Whitson showing his 4-H Calf

1974 – Joannie Davidson – Reserve Grand Champion

1976 – Pam Meakin – Reserve Grand Champion

1978 – Shane Davidson – Reserve Grand Champion

The Alcomdale 4-H Beef Club members in 1969 were Marvin Schole and Sid Meakin as assistant leaders; Alan Davidson; Cameron Schole; Terry Whitson; Rodney Kyle; Neil Cameron; Neil Busenius; Clacey Sim; Neil Bychyk; Francis Busenius; Janice Meakin; Christine Bychyk; Ann Arlow; Sharon Tomten; Philip Whitson; Keith Schole; Wayne Meakin; Devvy Davidson; Pam Meakin; Darcy Brenneis; Donna Davidson; and Connie Heemeryck. Leonard Whitson was leader that year.

Alcomdale 4-H Beef Club

By Jo-Ann Fesyk (Mueller)

It is both a pleasure and an honor to share with you the history of Alcomdale 4-H Beef Club. From 1978-79 to 1988-89, I've provided information on leaders, assistants, executives, memberships and highlights of every 4-H year.

During this period of time the only dramatic change has been the decline in membership. Mrs. Alberta Fesyk continued as leader from 1978 to 1983 with the following being assistant leaders at various times: Mr. Rody Malner, Mrs. Janet Davidson, Mrs. Pat Meakin and Mr. Mark Davidson. Other leaders over the years were: Pat Meakin 1982-1985, Joanne Mueller 1986-1989 and Pat Meakin 1989-1993.

Highlights were:

1978-79: Jo-Ann Fesyk placed first in the N.W. Region Breeding Record Book competition and attended Alberta 4-H selections and the Junior

Leadership Seminar. Hildton Malner attended Alberta 4-H selections. In the Edmonton and District show Wade Meakin placed second in the yearling heifer competition and first in showmanship. Calves sold for a club average of 88 cents per pound.

1979-80: Jo-Ann Fesyk elected secretary of the first Sturgeon District Council plus she placed first in the N.W. Region Breeding Record Book and with her judging team placed second in the N.W. Region.

1980-81: Leader Alberta Fesyk attended the Montana 4-H Congress. Alcomdale 4-H Beef Club celebrated 35 years of operation. Jo-Ann Fesyk placed first in the N.W. Region Sr. Record Book and second in the N.W. Region Breeding Record Book competitions.

1981-82: Norine Meakin won Grand Champion Steer at the Edmonton and District Beef Show.

1982-83: Assistant Leader Mrs. Pat Meakin attended the Montana 4-H Congress.

1983-84: Mrs. Pat Meakin was leader with the following assistants: Mrs. Janet Davison, Mr. Mark Davidson, Mrs. Alberta Fesyk, Mrs. Ann Wise and Mrs. Jo-Ann Mueller.

1983-84: Carla Brenneis placed first in the club and district public speaking competitions, placed second at the regional level and participated in the Northern Alberta Finals. Michelle Girard had Reserve Grand Champion Steer at the Edmonton and District Beef Show. The steer weighed 1,158 pounds and sold to Woodwards for \$2,895.

1984-85: Michelle Girard won her second consecutive Reserve Grand Champion Steer. The steer weighed 1,265 pounds and sold for \$2,530 to Safeway. She also had the Grand Champion Heifer at the Edmonton and District Beef Show. Pam Dixon was on the Sturgeon District team and received first in the N.W. Region Judging competition.

1985-86: Leader: Mrs. Pat Meakin, Assistant Leader: Mrs. Jo-Ann Mueller, Executive: President – Pam Dixon, Vice President – Joanne Girard, Secretary – Michelle Doidge, Treasurer – Michelle Girard, Reporter – Tina Cardinal, Club Members – Cylena Peterson. Club Resume: Pam Dixon place first in Sr. Public Speaking at club and Sturgeon District levels. She later placed second at the North Half of the N.W. Region competition. Joanne Girard placed second in Interclub Showmanship and first in the N.W. Region Jr. Showmanship competitions. Cylena Peterson won Reserve Grand Champion in the Cow/Calf class. “The Alcomdale Club may only have seven members but it’s one that has gained both regional and local recognition.”

1986-89: Jo-Ann Fesyk (Mueller) was club

leader with Mr. Mark Cardinal and Mrs. Jeanette Girard as her assistants.

1986-87: Alcomdale 4-H Beef Club moved their achievement day to Edmonton Northlands. Joanne Girard won Grand Champion Heifer in the Edmonton and District Interclub show and Champion in the N.W. Region show. Cylena Peterson won Grand Champion Cow/Calf in the Edmonton and District Interclub show. If the saying “good things come in small packages” is accurate, members and leaders of the Alcomdale 4-H Beef club are a living example.

1987-88: Joanne Girard and Cylena Peterson competed in the N.W. Region 4-H Multi Judging competition at Edmonton Northlands. Cylena placed seventh in the junior individuals. A trophy cabinet was donated to the Independence W.I. in recognition of their support given to the club. The cabinet serves as a display case for traveling trophies as well as trophies and ribbons won by the club.

1988-89: Joanne Girard and Cylena Peterson competed at the N.W. Region Multi Judging competition at Edmonton Northlands. Cylena placed second in the Jr. individual with Joanne fifth in Sr. individual to have a team placing of second. Leader Jo-Ann Fesyk (Mueller) attends first ever Montana Leaders Forum at Glendive, October 20-25, 1988.

1989-93: Pat Meakin was leader.

Because the Club only had six members in 1992-1993 it had to be closed down because, by 4-H rules, there has to be eight members to be a viable club.

Alcomdale 4-H Girls Clothing Club

History from Decades of the Independence Area (1981)

The Alcomdale 4-H Clothing Club began a number of years after the Agriculture Clubs. However there had been a Girls Club in operation for a number of years previously sponsored by the Independence Women’s Institute. The Girls Clothing Club began in November for the 1965-66 season. The leader was Mrs. Mollie Mills with assistant leader, Mrs. Joyce Whitson.

The members were: Marilyn and Linda Whitson; Doreen Gravel; Brenda and Shauna Yeomans; Elaine Tomten; Gloria Davidson; Lois Palmer; Lorraine Spargo; Patsy Trelenberg; Connie Frankson; Heather Hanson; Anita Seib; Gene Waage; Evelyn Falls; and Ruth Schafers. The president was Doreen Gravel with Linda Whitson as secretary.

For the year 1966-67 Mrs. Mollie Mills was leader again and Mrs. Joyce Whitson as assistant

leader. The members were: Elaine Tomten; Rita Kluthe; Linda Whitson; Evelyn Falls; Carol and Gloria Brenneis; Karen Benson; Carmel Bye; and Lubie Kostiw. Elaine Tomten was president and Rita Kluthe was secretary.

Linda Whitson won the public speaking competition and Dawn Brenneis was the efficiency winner in the 1967-68 year. Mrs. Joyce Whitson was the leader and Mrs. Grace Brenneis became assistant leader. The club members were; Elaine Tomten; Dawn and Violet Brenneis; Lorraine and Betty Spargo; Linda Whitson; Ann Arlow; Evelyn Falls; Lubie Kostiw; and Janice Meakin. Dawn Brenneis was president and Lorraine Spargo was secretary.

The Alcomdale Girls Clothing Club continued in operation to the end of 1976-77 club year. Mrs. Joyce Whitson and Mrs. Grace Brenneis continued in their respective positions through the 1970-71 season. For the next two years Mrs. H. Businius was the leader with Mrs. Joyce Whitson as an assistant. In the year 1973-74 Mrs. H. Mensink was assistant. The members of the club were: Margaret Mensink; Patricia and Mary Baker; Cindy Gibbons; Patricia Sivers; Carol Schimanke; Arlene Arlow; Debbie Nicol; Cheri Jantz; Angela Mensink; and Tanis Mills. The president was Margaret Mensink with Patricia Sivers as secretary.

It should be mentioned here that Linda Whitson was a local girl that made good. She was a member of both 4-H Beef and 4-H Clothing Clubs. She won 4-H competitions and trips. She won scholarships for three years at the University of Alberta in Home Economics. She joined C.U.S.O. and spent two and a half years instructing in Zambia, Africa before returning to Alberta.

Alcomdale Curling Club

History from Decades of the Independence District (1981)

On February 12, 1955 a meeting was held in the community to discuss the feasibility of building a curling rink in the Town of Alcomdale and forming a curling club. There were curling rinks at other centers and for a few winters the Alcomdale sportsmen had been curling on the Busby ice. As there was a good turnout that night, a club was formed that very evening. Dan Brenneis was elected President and Mr. M. Hamilton (Buck) as Secretary-Treasurer. Other committees were formed. Some of the names at that first meeting were Thomas Spargo, Will Arlow, John Libke, Ward Fulton, Alan Mills, Bill Sime, Edgar Ellett, Oscar Klapstein, Buster Ferguson, Art and Jessie Gill, Myron and Chris Davidson, Nick Byer and Alex Brenneis.



Alcomdale Curling Rink and Hall in 1958

It was decided to sell shares in the building and from then on the Alcomdale Community Hall was used in various ways to raise money for the curling club. There were no grants at that time.



First and second place winners of the first Alcomdale Bonspiel, 1958. L to R: Cecile & Ray Como, René & Alba (nee Ricard) Bourbonnais

Like some large projects, it takes some time to get it off the ground. In the years that followed, the club leased a timber limit in the Fort Assiniboine area at Timeu. They trucked necessary equipment that far to saw trees into logs, turn logs into lumber and truck home the finished product. Many hands under good supervision made light work and this is commendable. The rink was built the same way. The Garons from Pickardville were asked to foreman the job and the building progressed with all volunteer labor. It housed two sheets of natural ice, a large waiting room and a concession booth. The opening bonspiel took place the last weekend in January 1958 and this date remained the same each year,



From L to R: Ernie Wulff, Albert Wulff, Georges Nobert, Alphonse Nobert



Alcomdale Curling Club Crest

weather permitting, for the Grand Bonspiel using Riviere Qui Barre ice as well.

School children were given the privilege of the ice at a reduced rate. The "Old Timers" gathered every Wednesday afternoon for their games. Every year there were new names in the club as new

people came and others moved away.

Like all organizations, the curling club had its big times and its poor times but the doors of the curling rink were never closed.

Different bonspiels took place in the Alcomdale rink such as the 4-H clubs and Ladies Day, in which ladies of the district came to spend the day curling. Names and positions were drawn from a hat. There was a potluck noon meal and a prize for everyone when it was over. The Old Timers had a bonspiel as well. The Arthur Gill Trophy was played for. The rinks only played curlers who had been in the country 50 years or more.

The Ladies Curling Club held the concession booth for a number of years then rented it out. The Independence Women's Institute took the job for a few winters. After the curling rink was not being used, the rink was cut in half and moved to the farm of John Domino.

Busby Lions Club

In 1980 a group of local men decided to organize a Lions Club. In order to do this we had to have a charter and this required a certain number of

joined up members. By February of 1981 we had our charter.

Financially, we were not very stable, so we held a small raffle which brought in a few dollars. Since then we have been selling raffle tickets every year. In 1984 we also started the yearly sale of community birthday calendars. In 1985 we took over the selling of hamburgers at the community annual picnic. Since then we also have the concession booth at ball tournaments and sell chocolate bunnies at Easter.

In 1985 the Lions Club decided to organize a Fire Department in Busby. We did a lot of pushing and attending meetings until our goal was achieved. In 1986, with the help of the M.D. of Westlock and local organizations, the Fire Hall was built and a fire truck obtained.

In 1986 we applied for a CPR (Canadian Pacific Railroad) grant to purchase a skid shack to be used as a concession booth. It was repaired, painted and a stove and fridge installed.

In 1978, with the help of the Community League and the Gymkhana Club, water and power was installed at the Fair Grounds.

We are a community organization and all our proceeds go toward "community projects". We maintain the skating rink using the fire truck to make the ice and keep it flooded. Repairs are made to the fence and changing shed. Donations are made to the school and hall. In the past the dance floor in the hall was refinished and a large meat slicer was donated to the Busby Women's Institute for community use.

When the Busby and District Lions Club was chartered January 20, 1981 it had 32 members who are listed here. The (*) members are the chartered members still in the club today.

H. Bartlett, B. Berezanski, *A. Boles, *R. Bolle, M. Brenneis, N. Busenius, C. Byers, G. Carr, *W. DeRudder, J. Elliott, *M.S. Haisan, E. Kopp, A. Mantay, M. Meinczinger, C. Mirus, W. Mirus, J. Morris, D. McHugh, R. McNalley, E. Oldenburg, G. Onyschuk, D. Palmer, M. Payne, D. Pendrak, M. Riopel, R. Riopel, H. Schiller, G. Spargo, I. Spargo, J. Vandeborn, *M. VanHove, D. Witter

In 1990 women were able to join the club.

Lions Clubs are situated all over the world. The Lions Clubs are men and women who believe that by working together they will accomplish far more than would be possible as individuals. Busby & District Lions Club are volunteers and some of their projects have been:

- Busby skating rink
- Donation toward new playground at Busby Elementary School

- Funding for new clock for Dunstable School gym
- Obtained grants to put a new roof on the Busby Hall and built two new baseball diamonds at Busby Fair Grounds
- Purchased equipment for people with disabilities
- Support local soccer, volleyball and ringette teams
- Instrumental in establishing a Fire Department in Busby
- Addition to Fire hall in 2006 for meeting rooms
- Donations to: STARS • CNIB • Sight First • Eyeglass collection • Leader dog/ canine vision • Mearns Community League • Double Diamond 4-H • Cancer for Kids • MS and Breast Cancer • Can tabs for wheelchair purchase • Alcomdale Community League • Community calendars

As of the printing of this book, Busby & District Lions Club has 36 members and welcomes new members. Meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month. Speakers are brought in to speak on subjects of general interest. The meetings are at 8:00 pm in the newly built Busby & District Fire Hall meeting room.

Christopher Leadership Course

By Richard Friedrich with input from Jim Falls

In January of 1967 Father Rozmahel brought the Christopher Leadership Course to the Mearns and Riviere Qui Barre areas. The course was instructed by Paul Schelemy and Ed Savoie, with Fr. Ted Rozmahel as the spiritual director.

This public speaking course was a process to teach people to speak in public and to give the participants the confidence to do so with a Christian theme. During these lessons they were taught to make their talk come alive... to be themselves... to be enthusiastic... and to be sincere. They used "Ho-Hum", "Purpose", "Example" and "So-What" in their talks.

Laura Kieser, one of the students of this first class, says of the Christopher Course: "It gave me more confidence to speak out and to express my opinions and feelings more openly!"

The Motto of the course was "Better to light one candle than to curse the darkness".

The following year, Richard Friedrich, Jim Falls and Brian Durling took the instructors course and taught the course to a group of 31 participants.

Participants in the 1967 course were: Lawrence Brenneis, Lucien Bugnet, Yvonne Bugnet, Brian Durling, Glenna Durling, Alice Falls, Jim Falls, Richard Friedrich, Kasper Halwa, Mary Halwa, Rosemarie Halwa, Laura Kieser, Robert Kieser, Rosemarie Kluthe, John McDonell, Cullen McGillis, John McRae, Barbara Savoie, Gail

Schuller, Joseph Sheehan, Thelma Sheehan, Sister Andrene, Sister Bernice, Sister Corinne, Hector Soetaert, Vera Soetaert, Jack Stevens, Joyce Stevens, Rosemary Stitsen and Tony Stitsen.

For the 1968 Leadership course the instructors were Jim Falls, Brian Durling and Richard Friedrich and the spiritual director was Father Rozmahel. Participants were: Beatrice Arcand, Ed Arcand, Louise Brenneis, Oliver Brenneis, Maurice Bugnet, Evelyn Byer, Irene Byer, Joseph Byer, Melvin Byer, Tony Byer, Emma Como, Roy Como, Joe Ewaskiw, Louise Weaskiw, Denis Falls, Betty Kaup, Fred Kaup, Henry Kaup, Vivian Kaup, Dorothy Kluthe, Joseph Kluthe, Rita Kluthe, Morris Logan, Dennis Mitchell, Gerald Mitchell, Lillian Mitchell, Bud McGillis, Helen McGillis, Ralph Ouimet, Dolores Ricard and Dorothy Whitson.

Our area has not had the Christopher Course offered since 1968 but the course is still being taught in other areas and available to anyone who wishes to take it to improve their leadership and public speaking skills.

Double Diamond 4-H Multi Club History

By Shelley Chamzuk

The Double Diamond 4-H Multi Club was organized in the fall of 1970 by young people wanting both a beef and a horse club. Because of the two projects the name Double Diamond 4-H Multi Club was chosen. The first president was Lauretta Mitchell, Vice-President was Vernon Mitchell, Secretary was Ian McConaghy and Treasurer was Lorraine Huntley. The General Leader was Bob Burns and Assistant Leaders were Tom McConaghy, Gerald Mitchell, Adam Schriener, Keith Wiedrick and Anna Meakin. We had 19 members the first year with nine in light horse and ten in beef. The club met for many years in the Busby School.

For the first two years we only had beef and light horse projects but new projects came and went over the following years. In 1972 automotives was added for one year. In 1980 with the efforts of Janis Kendrick (Schole) veterinary science was added with Dr. Rolland Breault as project leader. This was a very worthwhile project, which lasted for two years. In the fall of 1987 we added outdoorsman and crafts. In 1991 the swine project was added with Murray Roeske as leader and continued for six years. Anne Rurak led the canine project in 1997. We added photography to our list of projects in 1998.

In 1974 the club was proud to have one of their own members, Colleen Harkin, as the Alberta 4-H Premier Award winner. The club has been active in public speaking and livestock judging as well as



Double Diamond 4-H Multi Club, 1971/1972 (Alcomdale, Mearns & Busby Area). Back row (L-R): Gerald Mitchell, Tony Menzink, Keith Dooley, Kathy Mitchell, Bob Burns, Fiona Cobban, Lorraine Huntley, Vernon Mitchell. Middle Row (L-R): Joyce Harkin, Kathy Mirus, Kerry McConaghy, Marian Dooley, Marilyn Mitchell, Adrian Dooley, Leslie Mitchell, Brian Harkin, Keith Wiedrick, Pat Dooley. Front Row (L-R): Ruth Schreiner, Crystal Harkin, Lois Burns, Anne Schreiner, Randy Schreiner, Bob Schreiner, Colleen Harkin

taking part in district achievement days. Shelley Meakin attended the provincial public speaking competition in Calgary in 1986 and in Edmonton in 1987. In these competitions you were told two hours ahead of the competition what your topic would be, then you would write your five-minute speech. Members of our club have represented Alberta on the 4-H Judging Team three times. They were Suzanne Dumaine in 1978, Janis Kendrick in 1980 and Shelley Meakin in 1986. In 1980 Janis Kendrick won the Grant MacEwan Conservation Award at conservation camp.

In 1987 the club started holding their horse achievement day as part of a campout weekend for the whole club. Members would come the night before with trailers, tents and sleeping bags, then a wiener roast and fun evening would be held. The next morning, breakfast would be made over the campfire by members of the outdoorsman project. During the Achievement Day, members of the other projects would help out by being announcer, ringmaster and bookkeepers. It was a fun day for the entire club.

Fundraising for our club was no ordinary event.

About four times a year the members would meet at Lawrence Shelley's to load or move 8,000 to 10,000 chickens. You knew that when you were done there would be donuts and pop at the front. You just had to forget what had been on your hands and chicken was not on your menu for a few days. Now our fundraising is a Turkey Bingo held in November of each year along with doing some farm sale concessions or other 4-H fundraisers.

Our beef Achievement Day is held at Nilsson Bros. in Clyde along with eight other clubs. We hold our horse Achievement Days at Get-a-Long Ranch west of Alcomdale. At the end of April each year the horse members meet with members from RQB Rancheroes and light horse clubs from the Westlock area for a fun show held at Get-a-Long Ranch.

Over the years many young people have belonged to the club and now some of them are project leaders and their children are Double Diamond members. Now in our 37th year we have 28 members coming from the surrounding areas and we hold our meetings every month at the Independence Hall. This year (2007-2008) the club offers four groups within the club, these

groups being Light Horse, Heavy Horse, Beef and Canine.

I myself was married in 1990 to Ron Chamzuk, originally from the Grassland area. He came out to Westlock to work in the oil and gas industry. In 1995 Ron formed The Hay Exchange, a company that trucks large bales of hay and straw. In October of 2005 he started a new company called RoShel Transport that works with the oilfield. I own a company called Precious Moments Photography and have had the honour of taking pictures of many families and weddings in the area.

We have six children, Sydney, Kelsey, Makayla, Kristyn, Kiara Joy and Kadin. I work for the Town of Westlock and part time as a photographer.

Our family is busy with 4-H, hockey, figure skating and acting. But our first priority is our church family in Mearns. We have been welcomed by such a wonderful, loving faith family.

Mearns Community Association

After the centralization of St. Charles School to Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre, community members decided to keep the school building and use it as a Community Hall. Following are excerpts from minutes of meetings.

August 24, 1969 – John McDonell informed meeting that we would have to be a licensed community association before the Divisional Board would consent to selling the school property to us. Cost would be \$100. Motion was carried that we form an association and have it registered as “Mearns Community Association”.

September 19, 1969 – Certificate of Incorporation was received at a cost of \$8.

September 29, 1969 – A cheque for \$100 was sent to Sturgeon School division and a receipt received stating the property now belonged to Mearns Community Association.

December 1, 1969 – **Initial meeting of the Mearns Community Association.** Jim Falls presided over the meeting. Moved by Richard Friedrich that we carry insurance on building. Moved by Lawrence Brenneis that we insure for \$5000 the building and contents. Harold Borle moved that we buy a used propane stove. Father McCaffery moved that the center be available at no charge to community organizations for non-profit functions. Moved by Joe Kluthe that we charge \$15-\$20 rent for functions other than the above. Robert Kieser moved that we have the building inspected to comply with regulations.

December 16, 1969 – It was agreed to pay Mrs. Kluthe \$21.28 for wallpaper. Dan Brenneis quoted



Mearns Hall, previously St. Charles School

the cost for insurance of \$100,000 public liability and \$5000 for fire insurance as \$54 per year. Joe Kluthe moved that we buy the insurance.

February 19, 1970 – Letter read from CWL offering to buy coal, Thank you letter to be sent. Emile Ricard volunteered to get pipe and build coat racks. Dan Brenneis moved that we revise the rental to \$15 and \$25 if hall not cleaned. Meeting was opened to discussion as to whether to keep the fire going. It was moved that we let fire go out and drain the water. It was decided that lunches/breakfasts be served after 11am Masses. Pancake breakfast would cost 50 cents a person or \$2 per family. Joe Kluthe moved that we buy an oil furnace to heat the basement.

July 30, 1970 – This meeting was held in conjunction with the Mearns CWL to discuss the possibility of catering for local weddings. Josephine Kluthe moved that we do cater when possible. Seconded by Laurette Bugnet. Carried.

October 14, 1970 – Discussed the fee for catering. Henry Schafers moved that we charge \$1.50 per person for members and \$1.75 for non-members. It was decided that we charge \$4 per couple for the Cabaret to be held on November 13.

December 14 1970 – It was decided that for “going-away” parties the community association would arrange for the party and the CWL would supply the gift.

February 10, 1971 – **First Annual Meeting of the Mearns Community Association.** Discussion held regarding rental prices. It was decided that we charge \$20 for members and the renter be required to clean up and look after their own fires. It would be \$25 plus clean up for non-members with the club looking after the fires. Lawrence Brenneis volunteered to make fires when needed for a fee of \$5.

March 8, 1971 – Meeting was opened with a discussion about selling the old one room school to the Hutterite Brethren. It was decided that a committee of three members be appointed to approach the Hutterites with a proposition of a

minimum of \$200. Committee members elected to do this were Lawrence Kluthe, Tony Byer and Richard Friedrich.

June 28, 1971 – Membership decided that the skating rink could be put to better use as a parking lot. It was moved that we sell the plywood and posts by tender. With regards to catering Carol Brenneis wedding, Emma Schafers and Laurette Bugnet kindly agreed to take charge. Emma Schafers moved that we have a farewell party for Mr. and Mrs. Dan Brenneis, Mr. and Mrs. Dvernychuk, and Mr. and Mrs. Firmen Boddez; CWL in charge of buying gifts. Lawrence Brenneis agreed to keep an eye on the hall for \$10 per month.

July 27, 1971 – A board of directors meeting was held regarding the sale of materials from skating rink. Lawrence Kluthe's bid of \$90 was accepted as highest bid.

October 20, 1971 – Guest speaker, Mr. Royen, was present. He gave us an idea of the endless activities that can be undertaken by a club such as ours. They included everything from dog shows to square dance clubs. He told us about money that was available to the MD through government grants and winter works projects. Of the \$15,000 available to the MD, 80% was to be spent in leadership training, etc and 20% for facility maintenance.

November 15, 1971 – Discussed the possibility of getting a new heating system. Membership decided that we try a 'learn to dance' club and a crafts club.

November 29, 1971 – There was general agreement that the 'learn to dance' club meet every second week with a fee of .50 cents per person or \$2 per family. The crafts committee decided on a soft leather crafts and woodwork.

January 31, 1972 – **Second Annual Meeting of Mearns Community Association.** Jim Falls presided over the meeting, 19 members present. Jenny Bererton reported that the 'Dance Club' has held two dance sessions with very good attendance. The club has purchased five records. There are 10 people in the 'Wood Craft Club'. A fee of \$2.50 is charged. It was suggested that more electrical outlets are needed. The meeting was advised that the Riviere Qui Barre 'Family Night' is very successful. Anyone wishing to take part can attend. Activities include volleyball, badminton, tumbling, ping-pong, etc. It was agreed to purchase lumber for propane bottle shelter to be built by wood working class. Meeting opened for election of officers. Successful members were: Tony Stitsen – president; Marion Friedrich – secretary; Jim Falls, Therese Ricard, Lawrence, Claire Stitsen – directors.

February 29, 1972 – It was decided that we

tender for sale the old stoker and fan, and also sell by tender four doors. Insurance premium of \$25 to be paid concerning the liability covering woodworking club. Gloria Brenneis and Bernadette Altmiks representing "Opportunity for Youth" project informed the meeting of their groups' plan to renovate and run the camp at Lac La Nonne. They asked for support and donations. It was decided to donate \$25 to the project. Josie Kluthe made a motion that we hold a bake sale to raise the money for the Youth project. Note – this project was turned down by government so no donation was needed.

May 4, 1972 – Order of groups to be in charge of functions was drawn from the hat; first two groups to be in charge of summer picnic and the last three in charge of cabarets.

September 20, 1972 – Discussion was held regarding applying for provincial grants. Suggested main project be a parking lot, which was estimated to cost approximately \$800. Jim Falls offered to finance half the cost. Motion made to submit an application to the board for operating expense of \$500, maintenance \$200, and parking lot \$800. Carried.

November 13, 1972 – Susie Kluthe offered to teach crafts in Mearns if enough ladies were interested. It was unanimously agreed that we support and sponsor a teen club.

January 10, 1973 – **Third Annual Meeting of the Mearns Community Association.** Election of officers. Successful candidates were: Harold Borle re-elected as president; Marge Kluthe elected as secretary treasurer; Theresa Sparling, Yvonne Kluthe elected as directors. Jim Falls and Tony Stitsen are serving another term.

January 10, 1973 – Chairman Harold Borle chaired meeting. Marion Friedrich was secretary – 14 members present. Tony Byer reported he has repaired roof of the center. Harold Borle reported he had chaperoned a Christmas party put on by Teen council, which was well received by all. Family Night committee appointed: Jim and Alice Falls, Tony and Claire Stitsen, Susie Kluthe, Therese Ricard, Teresa Sparling, Marge Kluthe as committee to look into details. Decided that brunches will be held once a month.

January 7, 1974 – **Fourth Annual Meeting of Mearns Community Association.** Election of officers. Successful members were: Richard Friedrich – president; Theresa Sparling – secretary-treasurer; directors – Oliver Brenneis by acclamation. New directors: Lawrence Brenneis, Jim Falls, Emma Schafers.

March 7, 1974 – Discussion regarding Women's Day, .50 cents per day per woman covered hall rent

and coffee, etc. Agriculture Dept will give \$20. Each woman gave \$5 for a total of \$125 (plus government \$20). Jim Falls spoke on the topic of Riviere Qui Barre Arena and request for possible help from Mearns and surrounding people. All in favor of support.

August 28, 1974 – Community Nursery School was discussed. Declaration was signed by ten community members to be submitted for Culture Youth Grant. This money would be used to fix up the inside of the hall. Richard Friedrich read an agreement between Alcomdale, Mearns, and Riviere Qui Barre regarding an Agricultural Society.

Mearns Community Association Members over the years

Sr. Agnesine	Pat Hittinger
Alvin Altmiks	Sophie Hittinger
Mary Altmiks	Paul Kerckhof
Robert Altmiks	Mrs. Kerckopf
Rose Altmiks	Joyce Kieser
Ludick Banack	Laura Kieser
Pauline Banack	Robert Kieser
Jenny Bereton	Alvin Kluthe
Jim Bereton	August Kluthe
Firmen Boddez	Dorothy Kluthe
Lorene Boddez	George Kluthe
Wayne Boddez	Joe Kluthe
Harold Borle	John Kluthe
Phyllis Borle	John Norman Kluthe
Alex Brenneis	Josephine Kluthe
Carol Brenneis	Lawrence Kluthe
Dan Brenneis	Marjorie Kluthe
Darrell Brenneis	Simonne Kluthe
David Brenneis	Susie Kluthe
Dawne Brenneis	Willie Kluthe
Donald Brenneis	Yvonne Kluthe
Ed Brenneis	Dennis Lirondelle
Elise Brenneis	Mac Lirondelle
Grace Brenneis	John Lister
Honarena Brenneis	Morris Logan
Irene Brenneis	Andrew Lutz
Lawrence Brenneis	Annie Lutz
Leo Brenneis	Evelyn Lutz
Leonard Brenneis	Joe Lutz
Louise Brenneis	Father McGrane
Oliver Brenneis	Father Mike McCaffery
Teresa Brenneis	Alice Nobert
Vivian Brenneis	Fred Nobert
Dennis Bugnet	George Nobert
Laurette Bugnet	Liza Nobert
Maurice Bugnet	Richard Nobert
Robert Bugnet	Joan Polakovits
Evelyn Byer	John Polakovits
Irene Byer	Emile Ricard
Joe Byer,	Therese Ricard
Tony Byer	Emma Schafers
Mike Dvernychuk	Henry Schafers
Alice Falls	Ruth Schafers
Denis Falls	Robert Sparling
Evelyn Falls	Teresa Sparling
Jim Falls	Claire Stitsen
Estelle Fisher	Tony Stitsen
Sr. Flora	Herb Trautman
Marion Friedrich	Kathy Trautman
Richard Friedrich	Mary Warshawski
Pete Girard	Rosemarie Warshawski

Yvonne Girard
Alf Hermanutz
Joe Hermanutz
Violet Hermanutz

Walter Warshawski
Annie Wills
Michael Wills
Sr. Mary William

The Association had held many fund raisers throughout the years; cabarets were held monthly during fall and winter, breakfasts, family reunions and parties and needless to say many, many meetings for different community groups. The Catholic Women's League held an 'Annual Fall Supper' with great turnouts in the facility. In 1995 the Association moved to the St. Charles Church basement and the old school was demolished.

Today the Mearns Community Association continues to be a big part of our community. It is in charge of renting the facility and helps with financial support. The church and community work very well together for the betterment of all. The Mearns Community Association has worked many bingos to raise funds for the general maintenance costs and repairs. They have received grant monies to purchase a storage shed, for painting projects and operational requirements.

In 2008 Yvonne Kluthe is president and Joyce Brenneis is secretary-treasurer.

Mearns Floor Curling Association

By Laura Kieser

Our small hamlet of Mearns became a landmark ever since we started floor curling in February of 1997 and we had some local tournaments.

It all started when we joined the Alberta Floor Curling Association. My husband, Robert, and I were asked by a special friend, Yvonne and Joe Leduc, to be on their team to floor curl at the Rendezvous Club in Morinville. We said yes, it would be fun, and we really enjoyed it. We started to go to different tournaments.



Floor Curling Tournament held at Mulhurst – October 1994. Winning second in the B event were Robert Kieser, Laura Kieser, Yvonne Leduc and Joe Leduc. Ferd Vervynck presenting award.



Mearns Floor Curling Tournament – February 1997. Winners of first prize were Emma Schafers, Larry Manning, Yvonne Kluthe and Robert Kieser. Dan Brenneis presenting award

One day Aime Auger, who really started this sport, heard about the renovating of our church basement in Mearns and asked if we would be able to have two lanes to floor curl there. After much talk we said we would try, so we got all the measurements and certain points to put on the circles and lines. With Aime's help to supply our needs, we were ready to have our first tournament on January 16 and 17, 1999 with 16 teams.

On the first day we had a supper, which was catered. The entry fee for two days and supper was \$80 per team. We had this going for three years. This was quite a bit of work for us people in Mearns so we decided to have only one day of floor curling and 12 teams with an entry fee of \$40 a team with lunch at noon of soup, sandwich and pie. Prizes are always given to first, second and third teams, and a consolation prize to the fourth team.

Teams from different towns would join our tournament: Barrhead, Jarvie, Redwater, Calder,



Youth group trying out floor curling in the parish hall

Siesa (South East Edmonton Seniors Association), Villeneuve and other towns. We are still going strong as of today. It is such a blessing to see all the seniors enjoying themselves in this sport and fellowship together.

Before, when people asked me where we were from, I would say Mearns and very few people ever heard of our little hamlet. Now our Mearns has gotten to be a landmark. Everybody knows where Mearns is and they love to come to our tournaments.

Mearns Senior's Club

By Yvonne Kluthe

The first organizational meeting was held October 26, 1994. There were 24 signatures of people eager to start a seniors group in St. Charles, Mearns. The president was Yvonne Kluthe, the secretary-treasurer was Oliver Brenneis and the vice-president was Richard Friedrich.



Mearns Seniors at Alpine Farms August 2005. Back row L to R: Joan Polakovits, Marge Kluthe, Marion Friedrich. Middle row L to R: Dorothy Kluthe, Phyllis Borle, Irene Manning. Front row L to R: Larry Manning, Yvonne Kluthe, Therese Ricard, Evelyn Byer, Harold Borle

Joe Dwyer suggested the seniors apply for a grant from the County of Sturgeon, which we did and received. The grant enabled the club to refinish the church basement. It was a big undertaking but, with the help of many community volunteers including the Kieser family and Joe Dwyer, the basement was finished in the fall of 1995. It is now enjoyed by all parishioners and the community.

On the second Friday of January each year our seniors hold an annual floor curling tournament in Mearns. There are 12 teams from all over the area, even from Edmonton, who compete for top honors with great determination and enthusiasm to be the best team of the day. For the last couple of years we also held a tournament in September.

Over the years the senior's club has taken trips to visit museums, fire halls, police stations, town



1999 – Mearns Seniors Club celebrate “St. Patrick’s Day in Legal” – Back row L to R: Larry Manning, Irene Manning, Dan Brenneis, Harold Borle, Jim Falls, Oliver Brenneis, Robert Kieser, Middle row L to R: Marge Kluthe, Phyllis Borle, Louise Brenneis, Laura Kieser. Front row L to R: Mary DeRudder, Therese Ricard, Emma Schafers, Alice Falls



Mearns Seniors Club – Bowling March 2007. Back row L to R: Jim Mudge, Harold Borle, Larry Manning, Irene Manning. Middle row L to R: Joan Polakovits, Phyllis Borle, Marge Kluthe, George Kluthe. Front row L to R: Adele Mudge, Yvonne Kluthe, Therese Ricard

murals and many other interesting places. Everyone enjoys these informative outings. We try to have a monthly meeting and after the meeting some floor curl while others play cards. We look forward to these evenings of comradeship and socializing. The Mearns Senior’s Group membership is getting smaller with some of the members passing away and several couples moving to other areas. But we will continue to keep going and enjoy our time together.

The Mearns Sew & Sews

By Phyllis Borle

One afternoon in the winter of 2005 a couple of neighbors were visiting and having coffee and talking about the cold weather and the plight of the homeless in Edmonton. They decided that afternoon to make some quilts to help keep these people warm. An appeal for extra fabrics and blankets went out to friends, family and co-workers and very soon these began to appear by the bag and box full. So, with other interested neighbors and family members, the fourth Saturday of every month was set aside as “Quilting Day” and work began.

By the fall of 2006 the group had created 23 quilts and donated them to the Hope Mission, so they would go out in their mission van to be given directly to the homeless on the streets. In the boxes and bags we also received balls of wool that were knit into sets of scarves, toques and mitts which were also donated to those in need. As a group, we were filled with a sense of doing something worthwhile and decided we needed a name, and so the Mearns Sew & Sews was agreed upon.

In October of 2007 we took 24 quilts and 25 toque, mitt and scarf sets to the Mission. We all enjoy having busy hands, the fellowship of neighbor helping neighbor and have pledged to keep the group going until we are no longer able to sew or knit.

Honouring Our Soldiers

By Lorette (Pelletier) Bruce

“They shall not grow old, as we who are left grow old.

Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning, We shall remember them.

We shall remember them.

Unite all peace loving peoples of our world in one holy purpose to defend the principles of freedom and brotherhood for which these valiant hearts lived and died.

Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me. In the name of the great Prince of Peace we pray.”

Excerpt, with permission, from the notes of Padre Louis Newell, Remembrance Day ceremony at the Royal Canadian Legion Branch #176 in Morinville, November 11, 2007



Why ‘TAPS’ is played (from the Internet)

Reportedly, it all began in 1862 during the Civil War when Union Army Captain Robert Ellicombe was with his men near Harrison’s Landing in Virginia. The Confederate Army was on the other side of the narrow strip of land.

During the night, Captain Ellicombe heard the moans of a soldier who lay severely wounded on the field. Not knowing if it was a Union or Confederate soldier, the Captain decided to risk his life and bring the stricken man back for medical attention.

Crawling on his stomach through the gunfire, the Captain reached the stricken soldier and began

pulling him toward his encampment. When the Captain finally reached his own lines, he discovered it was actually a Confederate soldier, but the soldier was dead.

The Captain lit a lantern then suddenly caught his breath and went numb with shock. In the dim light he saw the face of the soldier. It was his own son. The boy had been studying music in the South when the war broke out. Without telling his father, the boy enlisted in the Confederate Army.

The following morning, heartbroken, the father asked permission of his superiors to give his son a full military burial, despite his enemy status. His request was only partially granted.

The Captain had asked if he could have a group of Army band members play a funeral dirge for his son at the funeral. The request was turned down since the soldier was a Confederate. But; out of respect for the father, they did say they would give him one musician.

The Captain chose a bugler. He asked the bugler to play a series of musical notes he had found on a piece of paper in the pocket of the dead youth's uniform. This wish was granted and the haunting melody we now know as 'Taps' was born. The words are:

Day is done. Gone the sun.
From the lakes, From the hills, From the sky.
All is well. Safely rest. God is nigh.
Fading light. Dims the sight.
And a star Gems the sky.
Gleaming bright from afar,
Drawing nigh falls the night.
Thanks and praise for our days
'Neath the sun, 'Neath the stars, 'Neath the sky.
As we go this we know. God is nigh.

For King and Country
Members who volunteered for Active Service
with Canada's Fighting Forces

The Book Committee made every effort to obtain the names of all those who have served in the Armed Forces over the years

Busby and Area

Arnold, Adriel	Army	McConaghy, Mark	Army
Anderson, Sern	RCAF	McConaghy, Thomas	Army
Arnold, Leonard	Army	McConnell, Robert	RCAF
Bennett, Leonard	Army	McMillan, Stanley	Army
Cormack, Alexander	Army	McTavish, Donald	Army
Cormack, Joseph	Army	Mead, Philip H.	Army
Cormack, William	Army	Munro, Henry J.	Army
Cox, Bartle	Army	Munro, Maurice	RCAF
Dickinson, Russel	Navy	Munro, Stanley	RCAF
Dickinson, William	Army	Ott, Frank	RCAF
Elliott, Orlando W.	Army	Palmer, James	Army
Gray, Thomas	Army	Palmer, Richard	RCAF
Hohol, Alexander	Army	Petrie, Archie Armour	RCAF

Hunter, Robert	RCAF	Pipke, Jerry	Army
Jeremy, Hary	Army	Pretty, Norman	Army
Jeremy, John	Army	Scarwerks, E.	Army
Jeremy, Michael	RCAF	Schuller, Steve	Army
Jeremy, William	Army	Shiller, Herman	RCAF
Johnson, Jerry	RCAF	Spencer, Arlo	Army
Jones, Edward	Army	Stewart, John	Army
May, Elizabeth Amy	Navy	Thompson Careless, Gladys	Navy
McCloy, James	Army	Thompson, Evelyn	Army
McConaghy, Alice Mary	RCAF	Thompson, Roy	Army
McConaghy, Doris May	Navy	Wielsevich, John	Army
McConaghy, Herbert	Army	Wilcox, Earl	RCAF
		Wilkins, John	Navy



Pettibone Family's three sons served in the Armed Forces

Independence and Area
WW I

Elliott, O.W. (Bill)		MacKay, Alexander	
Garon, Adelard	Army	Rumba, Adolph	
Gray, William		Torrey, Charles Elliot	
Jordan, John			

WW II

Cunningham, V	RCNVR	Mitchell, Gerald	RCAF
Dickinson, Will	WW II	Palmer, Dick	
Ducarme, James	RCAF	Pettibone, Milton	Tank Corps
Ducarme, Maurice	RCAF	Pettibone, Ross	RCNVR
Ducarme, William	RCAF	Pettibone, Theodore	Tanks Corps
Edwards, Eric	WW II	Richmond, Charles	RAO
Eglen, Shirley	RCF	Schwerkov, Ewalt	Army
Fulton, Thompson	RCAF	Sim, Agnes	WDRCAF
Fulton, Ward	RCAF	Sim, Christine	CWAC
Gill, Bruce	RCAF	Sim, William	RCNVR
Henderson, Kathleen (Lecky)	RCAF	Sparr, Cleon	RCAF
Hodgson, John		Spraakman, Peter	RCF
Klapstein, Oscar	Army	Stewart, John	Army
Lecky, George		Sutton, Ken	RCAF
Lecky, Hugh	Army	Waegel, Eugene	CAO
McConnell, Robert		Whitson, Charles	RCAF
McDonald, Madeline		Whitson, Leonard	RCAF
McDonald, Shorty		Whitson, Richard	RCAF
Mills, Curtis	RCF	Whyatt, Fred	CAO
Mills, Marshall	RCAF	Wilcox, Earl	
Mitchell, Bert	RCF		

Morinville and Area
WW I

Gervais, Arthur (Garcon)	Army	Meyer, John	German Army
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Kieser, Charles	Army	Montpellier, Eugène	Army
Kieser, Leonard	Army	Ouellete, Anaciet	Army
McDonald, Louis	Army		
WW II			
Allarie, Léo		McDonald, Lawrence	
Behiels, Emile	Air Force	McDonald, Lucien	
Béland, Léon		(Joe)	RCAF
Bird, Gerald		McDonald, Richard	
Brenneis, Leonard		McDonnell, John	
Caouette, Paul		McRay, Don	
Casavant, Roger		Montpellier, Arthur	
Chabot, Ernest		Montpellier, Ben	
Chalifoux, Arthur		Morin, Camille	
Cheradarchuk, Johnny		Nobert, Armand	
Cournoyer, Daniel		Nobert, Arthur	
Craig, Albert		Parker, George	
Craig, Edward		Pelletier, Charles	Army
Curtis, Vince		Pelletier, Eveline	Air Force
Dalphond, Melville H.	RCAF	Pelletier, Robert	Navy
Dupuis, Georges		Perras, Robert	
Fitzgerald, Tom		Ricard, Damien	
Froment, Philias		Riopel, Ovila	
Gibeault, Peter		Rockwell, Bill	
Granger, Raoul		Roole, Ron	
Hittinger, Oscar		Rouleau, Arthur	
Hittinger, Vernon		Roy, Emile (Barouette)	
Hryciw, Emil		Royer, Joe	
Johnson, Einar		Saunders, John	
Kieser, George		Shank, Albert	
Krauskopf, Clarence		St. Laurent, Ernest	Army
Krauskopf, Joseph		St. Lawrence, Albert	father of Bill
L'Abbé, Albert			son of Albert
Lafond, Philippe		St. Lawrence, Bill	
Lafontaine, Porc			
Lalonde, Art		St. Onge, Harvey	
Lefèbvre, Léonard		Stapleton, Arthur	
Logan, Charlie Jr.		Tellier, Léo	
Lucki, Nick		Tellier, Marcel	
McClay, Lewis		Théberge, Armand	
McDonald, Arthur		Théberge, Léon	
(Cyclone)	RCAF	Toupin, Kick	
McDonald, Florence	RCAF	Wojtkiw, George	
McDonald, Gilbert	RCAF	Wood, Bill	
McDonald, Hector		Zwarick, Isador	

Riviere Qui Barre and Area WW I

Borle, Cyril		McDonald, Joseph
Borle, Ferd		MacDonald, Hugh
Caron Fred		MacDonald, Lawrence
Constantin, Ernest		MacDonald, Neil
Daniels, Reverend		McDougall, Angus
Desnoyer, Henry		McDougall, William
Desnoyer, Louis		McGillis, Angus
Fawcett, Elmer		McGillis, John W.
Fitzgerald, Thomas		MacLellan, Alex
Flynn, George		McRae, Mullen
Gagnon, Fred		Nelligan, James
Gagnon, Louis		O'Neill, Bernard
Gagnon, Urbain		Paquette, Albert
Hoefle, Joseph		Paquette, Leo
Hoefle, Pete		Poirier, Andre
Juneau, Arnadec		Sheehan, Peter
Kelly, Archie		Wood, James
Lambert, Emery		

WW II

Bain, Ambrose		McRae, Dan
Belanger, Gilbert		McRae, Gerard

Belanger, Marcel	McRae, Kenneth
Borle, Andre	McRae, Neil
Borle, Firmin	Meunier, Richard
Borle, Maurice	Nelligan, Allen
Brown, Fred	Nelligan, Matthew
Caron, Melvin	O'Neill, Thomas
Como, Robert	Pellant, Sonny
Fitzgerald, James	Pelletier, Armand
Franche, Julian	Perrott, Albert
Gadoury, Patrick	Perrott, Fred
Gadoury, Rene	Rooke, Arlo
Granger, Dan	Selsby, Glenn
Granger, Mose	Sim, Agnes
Granger, Wilfred	Sim, Christina
Kramps, Albert	Sim, William
Martell, Robert	Warke, John
McDonald, Ranald	Warke, William
McDonell, Ryan	Warke, Sylvia
McGillis, J.J.	Williams, Edward
McGuire, James	Witschen, Nicholas
McLeod, Lawrence	Wood, John
McRae, Angus	

Remember those presently serving in the Armed Forces

A Tribute to Canadians (from the Internet 2007)

A British newspaper salutes Canada... this is a good read. It is strange how it took someone in England to put it into words.

Sunday Telegraph Article: "Salute to a brave and modest nation" – Kevin Myers

The Sunday Telegraph, LONDON – UK

Until the deaths of Canadian soldiers killed in Afghanistan, probably almost no one outside their home country had been aware that Canadian troops are deployed in the region. And as always, Canada will bury its dead, just as the rest of the world, as always, will forget its sacrifice, just as it always forgets nearly everything Canada ever does.

It seems that Canada's historic mission is to come to the selfless aid both of its friends and of complete strangers, and then, once the crisis is over, to be well and truly ignored.

Canada is the perpetual wallflower that stands on the edge of the hall, waiting for someone to come and ask her for a dance. A fire breaks out, she risks life and limb to rescue her fellow dance-goers, and suffers serious injuries. But when the hall is repaired and the dancing resumes, there is Canada, the wallflower still, while those she once helped glamorously cavort across the floor, blithely neglecting her yet again.

That is the price Canada pays for sharing the North American continent with the United States, and for being a selfless friend of Britain in two global conflicts. For much of the 20th century, Canada was torn in two different directions: it seemed to be a part of the old world, yet had an

address in the new one, and that divided identity ensured that it never fully got the gratitude it deserved. Yet its purely voluntary contribution to the cause of freedom in two world wars was perhaps the greatest of any democracy.

Almost 10% of Canada's entire population of seven million people served in the armed forces during the First World War, and nearly 60,000 died. The great Allied victories of 1918 were spearheaded by Canadian troops, perhaps the most capable soldiers in the entire British order of battle.

Canada was repaid for its enormous sacrifice by downright neglect, its unique contribution to victory being absorbed into the popular memory as somehow or other the work of the "British".

The Second World War provided a re-run. The Canadian navy began the war with a half dozen vessels and ended up policing nearly half of the Atlantic against U-boat attack. More than 120 Canadian warships participated in the Normandy landings, during which 15,000 Canadian soldiers went ashore on D-Day alone. Canada finished the war with the third-largest navy and the fourth-largest air force in the world.

The world thanked Canada with the same sublime indifference as it had the previous time. Canadian participation in the war was acknowledged in film only if it was necessary to give an American actor a part in a campaign in which the United States had clearly not participated – a touching scrupulousness, which of course Hollywood has since abandoned, as it has any notion of a separate Canadian identity.

So it is a general rule that actors and filmmakers arriving in Hollywood keep their nationality – unless, that is, they are Canadian. Thus, Mary Pickford, Walter Huston, Donald Sutherland, Michael J. Fox, William Shatner, Norman Jewison, David Cronenberg, Alex Trebek, Art Linkletter and Dan Aykroyd have in the popular perception become American, and Christopher Plummer, British.

It is as if, in the very act of becoming famous, a Canadian ceases to be Canadian, unless she is Margaret Atwood, who is as unshakably Canadian as a moose, or Celine Dion, for whom Canada has proved quite unable to find any takers.

Moreover, Canada is every bit as querulously alert to the achievements of its sons and daughters as the rest of the world is completely unaware of them. The Canadians proudly say of themselves – and are unheard by anyone else – that 1% of the world's population has provided 10% of the world's peacekeeping forces. Canadian soldiers in the past half century have been the greatest peacekeepers on Earth – in 39 missions on UN mandates, and six on

non-UN peacekeeping duties, from Vietnam to East Timor, from Sinai to Bosnia.

Yet the only foreign engagement that has entered the popular on-Canadian imagination was the sorry affair in Somalia, in which out-of-control paratroopers murdered two Somali infiltrators. Their regiment was then disbanded in disgrace – a uniquely Canadian act of self-abasement for which, naturally, the Canadians received no international credit.

So, who today in the United States knows about the stoic and selfless friendship its northern neighbour has given it in Afghanistan? Rather like Cyrano de Bergerac, Canada repeatedly does honourable things for honourable motives, but instead of being thanked for it, it remains something of a figure of fun.

It is the Canadian way, for which Canadians should be proud, yet such honour comes at a high cost. This past year more grieving Canadian families knew that cost all too tragically well.

Local News Flashes!

By Marion Friedrich

Moose Hunters Issue Challenge

MORINVILLE – Recently, Joe Hermanutz of Alcomdale and Lawrence Kluthe of Mearns came back from their first big game hunting trip south of Girouxville, on the banks of the Smokey River. While there they killed a huge moose, which dressed over 700 pounds and had 13-point horns, measuring a 54 inch spread. These young hunters now are challenging anyone, to produce any specimen of moose to measure up to their prized trophy.

On return of the two after ten days spent on the trip, Alfred Hermanutz and Bud McGillis decided to scout the same countryside, and try their luck. Their hunting bag was two large deer, one with four-point antlers, and the other with five points.

Anyone who can produce proof that they have bagged a large moose, are requested to get in touch with the Hermanutz boys of Mearns or Alcomdale, meanwhile Joe and Lawrence claim top honors for the 1957 season.

Exchange student fascinated by snow, hockey

Excerpts from Morinville Mirror, November 1981

A 14-year-old Guatemala City resident, Karin Caballeros, is staying with the Richard Friedrich family near Morinville. She arrived November 9, and will return to her home in the tiny Central American country of Guatemala on January 7, 1982.

"The snow, the hockey, and the skating," is what



Karin Cabelleros (front) is introduced to a unique form of Canadian transportation on the Richard Friedrich farm – the skidoo. The exchange student was sponsored by her passenger and friend, Lisa Friedrich



June 25, 1981 – Craig Sasges, Glenn Friedrich and Todd Kaup (L to R) leaving for Mexico

she enjoys about Canada, and her favorite hockey player is Dave Hunter of the Edmonton Oilers.

A student exchange program sponsored under the organization, Intercambio, allows Central American students between 13 and 16 to visit Canada, and Canadian students to visit countries like Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador and Costa Rica.

This is not the first time the Friedrichs have welcomed a foreign student. About a year and a half ago, a Mexican boy spent the summer with them. And their son, Glenn, went to Mexico last summer.

"I told Glenn before he left what he could expect," said Mr. Friedrich, "but it really does not sink in until you live there. You live with a family and live as one of them and share some of the family responsibilities.

Karin spends her time going to Camilla school

during the week, and relaxing with the Friedrich children on the weekends. Unlike Canada, Central America students are on school vacation right now, so that is why she is here at this time.

"This is a great experience for both the children and family," said Mr. Friedrich.

Man's body found in the county

Excerpts from St. Albert Gazette, January 17, 2001

Police launch a murder investigation as investigators try to identify a man's body, which was discovered in the Sturgeon County by two local fishermen.

Human remains were found on Township Road 564, just east of Highway 44. The body was lying on a creek bed directly below a bridge. Two men stopped at the bridge and when they looked down, they saw what they believed to be a body and immediately reported what they saw to the RCMP. The investigation is now trying to determine if the body was dropped there or if the murder took place there. The body was lying on top of the ice rather than embedded in the ice indicating that it had not been there long.

The man's body was lying on its side, clothed in blue jeans and a gray T-shirt. He had a gray plastic bag covering his head. They will continue to treat this as a homicide. The cause of death is not being released at this time.

Police have indicted that the male victim is a six-foot tall white male whom is approximately 60-years-old, weighs about 180 pounds and has receding auburn hair.

Investigators hope to have more information on the case to release to the public soon.

RCMP confirm identity of body

Murdered man was infamous criminal in the U.S.
St. Albert Gazette, February 10, 2001

Local RCMP were tight-lipped Friday after a Spokane reporter published the name and cause of death of the man whose body was discovered in Sturgeon County.

In a story printed Thursday, Spokesman-Review writer Bill Morlin named Kenneth Lloyd Pendleton, an infamous bank robber and prison escapee, as the man whose "beaten and stabbed" body found on a frozen creek bed on Jan 11th. Police said his body was dumped on Township Road 564 just east of Highway 44, after he was killed.

"He was beaten and stabbed but my information is that the stab wounds were not fatal. My sources say he suffered serious head trauma," said Morlin, in a telephone interview Friday morning.

After the story was made public, K-Division Supt. Dennis Massey confirmed the man's identity as that of Pendleton, 60. RCMP are still not releasing the cause of death and refused comment on the accuracy of Morlin's story until the investigation is complete.

Pendleton's identity was confirmed through fingerprints almost two weeks ago by RCMP, who returned Thursday from contacting his next of kin in California and Washington, said Massey.

"This guy is incredibly notorious around here. He has generated all sorts of headlines since the 1960s," Morlin said, adding news of Pendleton's death was already spreading in Spokane on Tuesday. "Some people around here are famous enough to have their own file (at the newspaper), he has two."

According to the Spokesman-Review, Pendleton was a modern day Butch Cassidy who held up banks and once escaped from a Spokane County jail by using mop strings and abrasive cleaners to saw through prison bars. He prepared for a second successful jailbreak in 1968 from McNeil Island Federal Penitentiary, an Alcatraz-style prison, by taking cold showers to acclimatize himself to the icy waters of Puget Sound.

In 1980 we was caught trying to free himself from the Spokane jail before being sentenced to 25 years in prison for a number of bank heists throughout the U.S. A year later he was successful in escaping from prison before heading to Florida, where he outran a pack of bloodhounds after another bank robbery. Morlin said Pendleton used that robbery loot to buy a ranch in Montana, which was raided by police who found an extensive marijuana-growing operation." One of his neighbors tipped him off that the police were coming and he just up and left." He was finally caught in June of 1982 after trading in his car at a Washington dealership.

Morlin refers to Pendleton as one of the most prolific bank robbers ever seen in the American northwest. Since release from jail last summer, Pendleton is believed to have held up four Spokane-area banks, between Nov.10 and Dec.26, before making his way across the border. RCMP refused to say if he is suspected in any bank robberies in the Edmonton area or why he was in Canada. A warrant was issued in the U.S. after he failed to show up for an appointment with his parole officer last fall. Pendleton was found partially clothed with a Bootlegger bag covering his head by two local ice fishermen last month. Dr. Graeme Dowling of the medical examiner's office said the bag was placed over his head after he was killed. RCMP are seeking the public's help. "We are looking for people who

may have seen or conducted business with this victim prior to his murder," said Kading. (*Reprinted courtesy of the St. Albert Gazette*)

Man found dead near Mearns was shot say RCMP

Excerpts from Newspapers May 2005

A 20-year-old man found dead last week on a rural road near Morinville was murdered. An autopsy determined Geoffrey Sohaba died from a gunshot. His body was found by a farmer the night of May12th on the side of the road (Range Road 270, south of Township Road 564, southwest of Alcomdale). Sohaba was originally from South Africa, but was living in Edmonton. RCMP did not know how long he had been in Canada. RCMP are not releasing how many times Sohaba was shot or if he was killed at a different location.

Members of the Morinville detachment were called to the site Thursday and spent the night and early morning hours guarding the crime scene. The RCMP Forensics Identification Unit and two dog teams were brought in Friday to search the area. A third unit, known as the Special Tactical Operations, scoured the surrounding fields in a grid-by-grid search for further evidence.

Grant Friedrich, the farmer who found Sohaba, said the body was face up and cold. The body was in plain sight and it didn't appear any attempt was made to hide it, Friedrich said.

RCMP said they have no indication that Sohaba was a gang member, but they are still investigating that possibility. There is no further information known about this crime.

The Gruesome Tale of Swift Runner Missionary's skepticism broke seal off Native's secret

Edmonton Journal, Aug. 30, 1980

Our province has a long and bloody history of murder. Some cases are famous, some all but forgotten. In this, the first of a series on murder, Journal reporter Don Thomas relates the strange tale of Swift Runner.

It had been a hard winter, game was scarce and after exhausting even the squirrels, the 10-man hunting party was reduced to eating its rawhide tent.

The youngest boy was the first to go. He was buried in a lonely grave in the thickly forested Sturgeon River country. Swift Runner's mother and brother went off on a last desperate hunt never to be seen again. His other five children succumbed swiftly and their grief-stricken mother shot herself.

Only Swift Runner, or Katist-chen survived. In March of 1879 he came to the Oblate mission at St. Albert to tell of the terrible tragedy near Egg Lake about 32 kilometres north of the mission. The priests took pity on the grieving father, giving him lodging and praying to scourge the devils plaguing his nightly sleep.

But there were some troubling aspects to the story. Other natives had not had such bad luck hunting. And why was a man who had survived starvation in such good shape? There were no answers to these questions.

Swift Runner fitted easily into the routine of the mission, playing with the children and telling tales of hunting expeditions in the north.

But one priest remained skeptical and went to the North West Mounted Police at Fort Saskatchewan. They already had warning from other natives not to trust Swift Runner and decided to investigate.

He was taken into custody (Sergeant Sam Steele made the arrest) and willingly talked, sticking to the basic gist of his story. But when the police took him toward the site of the death camp he became increasingly agitated and sullen and clammed up entirely.

Sub-Ins. Sévère Gagnon was at a loss to know what to do but one of his Métis guides had an idea. A batch of 'strong medicine' was brewed to loosen their prisoner's tongue. Into strong tea a plug of chewing tobacco was tossed and the mess was steeped overnight. As the police looked on in astonishment next morning, Swift Runner knocked the brew back with gusto and soon opened up, leading the police to the desolate camp.

Strewn about were eight human skulls, bits of clothing and hair. It was apparent this was not the work of prowling bears, as Swift Runner had claimed. There was no sign of bears and the leather tent supposedly eaten by the starving family was found in the branches of a tree. Hidden in a clump of willow by the lake was an iron pot, its insides coated with fat.

First murder trial in the Canadian West...

Swift Runner was returned to Fort Saskatchewan and charged with murder. Six men were sworn August 16, 1879 for the first murder trial in the Canadian West. On the stand, Swift Runner admitted killing his wife and five of his children, but stood by his claim that the other child starved to death and his own mother and brother disappeared. When the trial ended two days later he was convicted and sentenced to hang on December 20.

A few days before that date, Father Hippolyte Leduc finally learned the horrible truth after



Swift Runner in leg irons with North-West Mounted Police jailer – 1879

Glenbow Archives NA-504-1

convincing Swift Runner it was the only way to end his tormented dreams. It was more than anyone wanted to hear.

He told of falling sick around the middle of February. Others in the party had no luck hunting. They killed and ate their dogs.

His mother and brother went off hunting while Swift runner stayed with his wife and the children. Their hunger worsened. His wife and five of the children set off after his mother and brother, hoping the two had found something. Swift Runner was left alone with his 10-year-old boy. Several days passed and then one morning Swift Runner attacked the boy, shooting him in the head. For the first time in weeks, Swift Runner had meat.

Later, wandering through the woods, he found his wife and the children and told them the boy had died of starvation. After three days, the oldest remaining child died and was buried.

A few days later a rage overtook Swift Runner and he shot his wife and killed his three daughters. For more than a week Swift runner and his only remaining child, a seven-year-old boy, ate the flesh of the woman and three girls.

When spring came there was better hunting. But Swift Runner feared the boy would talk and one day he shot and ate him.

The macabre web was completed when he told

police he had also killed and eaten his mother and brother.

First legal hanging in the Canadian West... With his confession to Father Leduc, Swift Runner's dreams vanished and he approached the day of his execution with bright spirits. **It was to be the first legal hanging in the Canadian West** and the mechanics of it seemed almost comical to him. The temperature hovered at below minus degrees Celsius on the execution day. With great interest he examined the scaffold that had been hammered together outside the guard room. He stood on the trap door while his arms and legs were bound, cheerfully thanking the police for their kindness and scolding the hangman for making him wait so long in the frigid air.

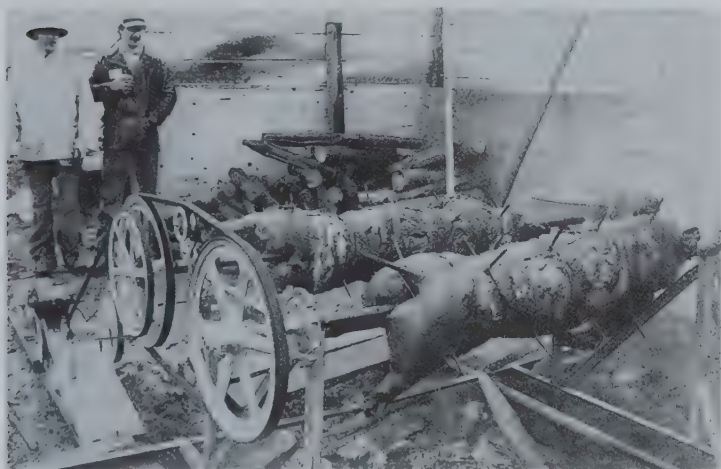
(Story taken from the Journal Library. Published Aug. 30, 1980. Photo courtesy of Glenbow Museum, Calgary)

Mearns Homecoming, 1980

Rain didn't dampen Mearns Homecoming

By Pat Griffith. St. Albert & Sturgeon Gazette, August 7, 1980

Cold rainy weather didn't dampen the enthusiasm in Mearns on Sunday, August 3, as Homecoming '80 went on as scheduled. When it became obvious the weekend deluge would make the planned outdoor activities impossible, organizers of the celebrations arranged for the old-fashioned picnic to move indoors to the auditorium of Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre.



Bob (left) and Norman Logan got a little wet, but they, along with Bernie Girard, gave the people of Mearns a feast of roast pork never to be forgotten

The Homecoming marked the 80th anniversary of the original Mearns church. About 250 people attended the special anniversary mass said by Father Barry Glendenning.

"The whole day was a tribute to the pioneering

spirit of the community. We all held up well in spite of the weather," Father Glendenning told the Gazette.

Mrs. Therese Ricard, president of the Mearns Catholic Women's League, said the day began very early for organizers of the event. Bob and Norman Logan and Bernie Girard were up early and by 7:00 a.m. had built a shelter for two large pigs roasting on a spit.

During the afternoon the auditorium was the scene of visiting and reminiscing as a display of old photographs jogged the memories of long-time residents of the area.

Although many of the outdoor events had to be cancelled, Gordon Worobek and Frank Langer organized races for the young people. Everyone enjoyed the fun as three-legged, sack and wheelbarrow racers sped across the auditorium floor.

"Thanks to the speedy carving of Lawrence, George and Willie Kluthe and Vic Girard, dinner was served on schedule by 7:00 p.m.," Mrs. Ricard said. "The women of the community had worked very hard to prepare the homemade pork and beans, salads and desserts. It was a real old-fashioned picnic. I am really grateful to everyone who worked so hard to make the day a success."

Mrs. Ricard said the Mearns Homecoming T-shirts were a popular souvenir and anyone still wishing to buy one should contact Mrs. Marion Friedrich.

Mrs. Ricard said 675 people had replied to the homecoming invitations but the rain probably held many back. However, about 450 people attended the dinner, coming from as far away as Yakima, Washington; Coeur d'Alene, Washington; Vancouver Island; Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

"MearnStock 1994" Harvest Moon Festival

"Build it and they will come" By Janet Boddez

In 1994 a music festival called "MearnStock Harvest Moon Festival" was held during a warm weekend in August to celebrate the performances of local musicians in the communities of Mearns, Calahoo, Riviere Qui Barre, Villeneuve and Busby. A group of approximately 10 local people, kick-started by the Joe Sheehan family, organized the festival and called on the help of many community members to pool their talents and help make the festival a success. The festival was held in Mearns on land that had been recently purchased by Dan Sheehan.

As well as singing there were guitar and piano solos, highland dancing, down home jigging,

bagpipes, mouth organs, vocal solos and performances by entire choirs. About 300 people attended bringing lawn chairs, umbrellas, blankets, picnic lunches and coolers. They came with campers and tents; they drove, walked, biked and some even came on horseback. The audience was enthusiastic and appreciative and used words like 'terrific' and 'awesome' to describe the weekend. Many locals still have the MearnStock t-shirt they purchased that day.

The majority of the musicians who performed at the festival were local people, many of whom took



Mearnstock celebrated the performances of folk from Mearns, Calahoo, Riviere Qui Barre, Villeneuve and Busby. A true folk festival



The stage at 'Mearnstock harvest Moon Festival' in 1994. "Build it and they will come...and folks did!"



The audience came well prepared to enjoy a weekend filled with music



Sharing memories of days gone by, the older Sheehan kids took the stage with mom accompanying them on the piano and sang songs from their childhood days. L to R: Thelma (on piano), Darrell, Joan, Dan & Mary

the stage for the first time in their lives. The weekend was a great success. A hat was passed to collect money to cover the costs of organizing the weekend and the money leftover was donated to the Mearns community.

St. Charles Borromeo Parish 75th Anniversary Celebrations

Excerpts from WCR article by Ramon Gonzalez, week of June 20, 2005

On June 12 some 300 parishioners and guests filled the small St. Charles Church to capacity to mark the parish's anniversary. Archbishop Thomas Collins and Father Jan Sobkowicz, who serves Mearns from Villeneuve, concelebrated the anniversary Mass. Father Oscar Monroy of Red Deer, who will take over from Sobkowicz in August, assisted in the celebration. Following the Mass, Collins and the priests blessed a newly built grotto for Mary outside the church.



Blessing of the Marian Grotto by Archbishop Thomas Collins – 2005

A picnic on the church grounds, the blessing of a tree in honor of those who have been at the parish for more than 50 years, a blessing of the cemetery grounds and a recount of the church history were also part of the celebration. "This parish is very active; it has many, many groups," noted Sobkowicz. "These are very good people. It's a joy to be their pastor."

While the parish celebrated the anniversary of its current church, built in 1930, the year Father John Stacey became the first resident pastor, the parish traces its history back to at least 1902. It was in 1902 that the mission church of St. Charles was erected by volunteer labor and donated materials.

Beside the church, a small rectory and barn were established for the use of the Oblate priests from the Alexander Indian Reserve who traveled by horse every two weeks to say Mass and serve the needs of the parishioners. There were 133 Catholics in the area at the time. Today, about 50 families regularly attend Sunday Mass, including some who come from the neighboring community of Busby, whose church closed some six years ago. Most are farm families and acreage dwellers of French, Native, and German background.

The parish today has many groups, including a strong liturgy group, a catechetical team, a readers' group, a CWL council and a Knights of Columbus council, a choir, a prayer group and a youth group. A few of the young people, along with some adults, have gone overseas to Scotland, Guatemala and

Jamaica in recent years to do missionary and volunteer work.

Long time parishioners of St. Charles say things haven't changed much except for the fact there were more parishioners some 50 or 60 years ago and the School Sisters of Notre Dame used to run a school in Mearns. Another change is the arrival some years ago of the Hutterites, who bought land from many Catholic parishioners who moved away.

St. Charles Parish is home to whoever was raised around Mearns and the parishioners take care of their home. Everyone in the community participates in community socials and fundraisers for the maintenance of their church. They upgraded the church through volunteer work as money became available and then they put in a whole new basement. Members of the Catholic Women's League clean and sew the altar linens and do all the housekeeping. Mearns is a small rural community so people pull together and are always ready to participate. The church is the center of their spiritual life.



75th Anniversary – Graveyard Blessing – 2005

Blessing Prayer for the Planting of a Tree

Lord and Holy Creator of trees and forests, come and place your blessing of life upon this tree. In the Garden of Eden, You planted both the tree of knowledge and the tree of life. May this tree be a tree of life to all the earth. May its leaves breathe forth the life-breath of oxygen. May its branches be living space for animals that climb among them and for birds of the air that nest there. May those in need of shelter from the summer heat find in its shade a refreshing refuge. May it give to all that look upon it the gift of life-renewing beauty. As blessings of peace and life were the fruits of the tree of your Son, Jesus, may those same fruits flow from this tree which we have planted in your holy name, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

This tree is dedicated to those parishioners who have been a part of our Parish for 50 or more years.

Alex Brønneis
 Dan & Grace Brenneis
 Oliver Brenneis
 Richard Friedrich
 Therese Ricard
 Robert Altmiks
 Yvonne Kluthe
 Lawrence Kluthe
 William Kluthe
 George & Marjorie Kluthe
 Laurence Lirondelle
 Andrew & Annie Lutz

KIDS IN CHURCH

A little boy was overheard praying:
"Lord, if you can't make me a better boy, don't worry about it.
I'm having a real good time like I am."

~~~~~

Six-year-old Angie and her four-year-old brother Joel were sitting  
together in church.

Joel giggled, sang, and talked out loud.  
Finally, his big sister had had enough.  
"You're not supposed to talk out loud in church."  
"Why? Who's going to stop me?" Joel asked.  
Angie pointed to the back of the church and said,  
"See those two men standing by the door?  
They're hushers."

~~~~~

A mother was preparing pancakes for her sons, Kevin, 5 and Ryan 3.
The boys began to argue over who would get the first pancake.
Their mother saw the opportunity for a moral lesson.
"If Jesus were sitting here, He would say,
'Let my brother have the first pancake, I can wait.'"
Kevin turned to his younger brother and said, "Ryan, you be Jesus!"

~~~~~

A father was at the beach with his children  
when the four-year-old son ran up to him,  
grabbed his hand, and led him to the shore  
where a seagull lay dead in the sand.  
"Daddy, what happened to him?" the son asked.  
"He died and went to Heaven," the Dad replied.  
The boy thought a moment and then said,  
"Did God throw him back down?"

~~~~~

A wife invited some people to dinner. At the table, she turned to
their six-year-old daughter and said, "Would you like to say the blessing?"
"I wouldn't know what to say," the girl replied.
"Just say what you hear Mommy say," the wife answered.
The daughter bowed her head and said, "Lord, why on earth did I
invite all these people to dinner?"

Worshipping

Church Histories Independence United Church

from *Decades of the Independence District* – (1981)

On October 2, 1902 the first church service was held in the Independence district with Mr. James Kelly officiating. It was held in a sod roofed log house, the residence of the Richard Pickering family, across the road from what was known so long as the Ellett Bros. Farm.

About that time, Mr. Collins, a Civil War veteran and a staunch Presbyterian, bought land a mile north of the Pickering farm. He built substantial farm buildings and was instrumental in having the Independence Church and Independence School erected directly north of them. Credit has been given to a Mr. Owens in giving the name Independence but other recollections indicate that Mrs. Jerry Smith was the person who named Independence to both church and school after Independence, Missouri.

Mr. James Kelly, with his wife and family, had come to the Ray district just east of Riviere Qui Barre, N.W.T. in 1901 and bought a farm there. The Goshen church in this area had been established in 1898. Mr. Kelly was asked to conduct services in the new field Independence, west and north of Ray.

After a few years Mr. Collins rented his farm and returned to his former home in Nebraska. During his absence, the parishioners decided to move the church building to a more central position in the area. It was moved back to the original site of the first church service and placed on the corner of NW 34-46-27-W4, four miles west of the present town of Alcomdale where it remained until 1941. Mr. Collins was greatly disturbed on his return to find his church gone and always claimed it had been stolen.

In May 1913 Mrs. Wm. Mills, Miss Jessie Browning and Mr. George Jenkins started the Independence Sunday School. Mr. Jenkins was

Superintendent. Miss Browning had in her class: Hal Browning, Britton Mills, Philip and Cecille Criss, Beatrice Jeffers, Wilfred Phelps, Don, Sheila and Frank Kennett, Nellie, Eva and Frank Lovelock, Ester and Viola Goodman, Lyda Holland, Buster Johnstone, Maud Miller, Marjorie Sumner and Lester Cox.

Mr. Wm. Mills led a Bible class and those attending were: Ada Criss, Clara Browning, Leroy Criss, Eddie Pickering, Carl Browning, Dea Taylor, Billie Waage, Harry Smith, Mr. and Mrs. R. Pickering, Mr. and Mrs. Harold, Mr. and Mrs. G. Jenkins, Mr. and Mrs. Criss, Mr. and Mrs. Phelps, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Kennett, Mr. and Mrs. R. Jeffers, Mr. and Mrs. H. Goodman, Mr. and Mrs. Johnstone, Mrs. Holland, Mrs. Browning, Mr. J. Cox, Mrs. Aiggers, Mrs. T. Lovelock, Miss Thompson, Alec Kelly, Mr. James Kelly and Mrs. Lines.

Mrs. Mills sent to her former home in Chicago for bibles and hymn books. As more new families settled, more new names were added. Three coming a little later were Bailey, Skinner and Pettibone.

By this time James Kelly was making his influence felt much farther away than Independence. With his faithful team he would travel as far as Vermilion Springs, Busby, Manola, Mosside and Belvedere. In 1913 he was accepted for ordination by the Presbyterian church and the popular title "Preacher Kelly" was changed to Reverend Kelly. For those times, his salary was meager, never amounting to more than \$50 a quarter.

Mr. Kelly knew his bible well and any debate in which he took part he invariably came out victorious. He often rose to speak without previous study but quickly had the subject in control, much to the embarrassment of his opponents. In 1922 the Kelly family moved to the Sion district, west of Independence, and a church congregation and building were established there.

In 1917 the records show Miss Eva McKittrick was the superintendent of the Sunday school with Mr. Gale Ashbaugh leading the Bible class.

In 1920 there was a reorganization of the Sunday school. Mrs. Fulton, Warren Fulton's mother, and Mrs. Wm. Mills were in charge. Mrs. Mills became superintendent and continued in that position for many years. Tribute is to be paid to Mrs. Warren Fulton who taught the Young Peoples' class for many years and to Mrs. Alex Macdonald and Mrs. James Mitchell who were so faithful in the Primary Department.

In due time, primary and adult chairs were bought from the receipts of a concert put on by the Sunday school. A stage was rebuilt in the church, the floor painted and woodwork varnished. The purchasing of a slide lantern was a highlight, where at some Sunday evening services some very good slide sets were shown, two of them coming to mind were Dr. Grenfell and Ben Hur. The extra picture rolls and cards were sent to China and India. Papers were sent to wherever needed. Contests in attendance and memory work were held. Bibles were given to members and many lives were brightened with gifts from the Birthday Box pennies. The Sunday school picnics, fishpond and concerts were annual events. In the records there is a receipt dated 1921 for the purchase of a new organ from Heintzman and Co., "Ye Olde Firm".

From the church's beginning there were only short intervals when there was not a choir. Those who sang in it gave willingly of their time and talent.

In 1925 a church union became a vital issue. The church, which was Presbyterian, decided to join the United Church but, Mr. Kelly, who was a staunch Presbyterian, required much persuasion, and it was not until 1927 that the final transfer was made. The records quote that Mr. Kelly resigned from the conference in 1929. The congregation followed his lead and the church reverted to Presbyterian for a few years.

On October 12, 1932 a special service was held in the Independence Hall to honor Rev. James Kelly's 30 years of service in the ministry. There was an attendance of 200 people representing the many points where he had held services. Mr. Wm. Mills presided as chairman of the church board. Dr. F. Roxborough, from Edmonton, gave the address. An illuminated, hand printed scroll was presented to Rev. Kelly by Mrs. Arthur Bailey, the only resident member of the congregation of 1902.

Rev. Kelly remained as minister until his retirement in 1934. He passed away in 1939.

The years following Rev. Kelly's ministry passed in rapid succession. Few ministers stayed longer than three or four years. Each, however, left a mark on the development of the church. The Reverend Willis

Leard came to Busby in June, 1935 and left in June, 1939. During the fall of 1933, Independence once more became a United Church and was reorganized with Busby and Pickardville to be called the Busby charge. It was during Rev. Leard's term that the building of a new church of Independence was discussed. Rev. Leard seldom let weather keep him from attending church. If the roads were impossible for the car he found other means.

Reverend A. Tate Young, who followed Rev. Leard, persuaded the members to build the new church. Everyone was stimulated to work at the project. The church was built one mile east of the Ellett corner, directly across the road from the Independence Hall. Margaret Benson donated one acre of land for the site of the church. It was built and dedicated in 1941. At the opening service, Reverend O.R. Lavers and E.G. Turnbull, of Edmonton, along with Reverend A. Tate Young, all took part.

Reverend Mr. Chapman followed Rev. Young for a short time. Eldred Miller and Frank Chubb took three years each of student training in the Busby field.

At a meeting at Independence for the Busby charge, it was decided that the Busby charge could be self-supporting and call an ordained minister. The Reverend Ileen James came to us for three years. The manse for the minister was situated at Busby. Miss James later married Howard Munro of Busby. The latter became a minister in the United Church.

In 1954, the Independence Church was in need of more room and a new floor. As a result a full basement was excavated and the present church moved on to a foundation. The power was installed, the interior refinished and central heating installed in the basement.

Once again we became a student field as a result of the proximity of the Busby charge to Edmonton. Glen Betts was a student with us in 1954-56. Jim Veitch was a student in 1956-59, well remembered by some, who in his own quiet way gave so much help to those who needed it.

George Whitford who followed Mr. Veitch was an Englishman who had started out to travel across Canada – on a bicycle. He and his wife pedaled on a bicycle built for two with a carriage on behind for their small son. In three and a half months they covered the distance from Quebec to Kelowna, British Columbia. They returned to Alberta and George entered the ministry to receive his ordination in 1962.

Dan McQuarrie is remembered for being a builder everywhere he went. During his time he

encouraged the Busby congregation to build a new church and the three congregations to build a new manse in Busby.

James Nicholas came as lay supply in 1964. He had been a farmer in the Barrhead area and had spent several years in the Peace River area as a lay minister. His wealth of Lancashire stories with his intimate knowledge of western farm life, made his sermons interesting and his presence welcome at social affairs. While on the charge, Mr. Nicholas received the right to conduct communion and perform marriages. He was justly proud of this honor and his first marriage service in the Independence Church was that of Gloria Davidson and Jack Cazes.

During Mr. Nicholas' time with us, Independence had another memorable event. In 1966, the Spargo Brothers of Alcomdale offered to pay half the cost of an electric organ in memory of their late brother John. The congregation rallied and within one week had bequeathed enough money in memory of loved ones who had passed away to purchase an organ. The memorial plaque on the organ reads: "In memory of the founders and pioneers of Independence Church this organ is gratefully dedicated on this third of April, 1966."

A memorial book was purchased and the history of the church recorded by James Ducarme, a former member. Pictures were also added. Further memorial contributions have provided hymnal books in our church.

Mr. Wayne Shortt came to Independence after Mr. Nicholas. He introduced a guitar, modern hymns and music to what he probably felt was a too conservative congregation. During these years the Sunday school thrived and by 1950 the attendance had reached to over 100 members.

When Mrs. Mills retired as superintendent, Mrs. Mitchell held the position for a few years. Others took their turn in the following years: Britton Mills, James Kyle, Ward Fulton, Orpha Benson, Karoline Arlow, Florence Cameron and Joyce Whitson.

Our organists through the years, before the electric organ, were Mrs. R. Pickering, Mrs. G. Ashbaugh, Mrs. Warren Fulton, Mrs. W. Reynolds, Mrs. W. Waage, Kay Connor, Jean Mitchell, Laura Taylor, Richard Morton, Pearl Libke, Helen Macdonald, Ruth Fulton and Florence Mills. After the new organ, there were Marilyn and Linda Whitson, Sheryl and Kathy Kyle, Cess Brown, Margaret MacDonald and Audrey Wiedrick.

In the 70's we had a joint ministry arrangement with two ministers, Reverend Mina Poole and Reverend Frank Andrews. They held services in a very large area centering around Westlock. Through

them we had the benefit of two minds and to some extent, two points of view which proved to be stimulating. Since then Reverend Charles Ritchie, Reverend Pat Tyson, Reverend Sharren, and Reverend Jennifer Ferguson, have served the community.

Independence Church celebrated their 50th anniversary on Sunday, May 18, 1975. After the Church closed in June of 1994, the people attended the Busby United Church.

St. Anthony Roman Catholic Church, Busby

By Claire Stitsen

The area north of Edmonton was surveyed and opened up for settlement in 1882. Nearly ten years went by however, before those parts, more removed from Edmonton, drew much attention. Only two main trails went through the general area. One was the old pack trail to Athabasca Landing, which had been widened into a cart trail as early as 1879. The other was the 80-mile pack trail through St. Albert to Fort Assiniboine. Settlers used these trails, other Indian trails, and the new cut-lines to find and establish their land. The arrival of the railroad at South Edmonton in 1891, as well as the efforts of church authorities to attract groups of settlers to the territory, speeded up the pace of settlement. At the turn of the century, there were two churches that served the small communities of our area, St. Charles at Egg Lake and St. Emile at Legal. The Egg Lake Settlement had preceded the influx of settlers as early as 1887. Father Thomas Quevillon celebrated mass there and taught at a local school. Many pioneer families of our area remember the little church at the east end of the Egg Lake cemetery, which dates from the 1900's.

In 1912-1913, the ED&BC (Edmonton, Dunvegan and British Columbia) Railroad came through the territory, offering fresh opportunities for settlement, but also causing the decline of communities such as Advance and Edison. Busby, Alcomdale, and Mearns came into being at this time.



St. Anthony's Church, Busby

Before then, Sunday masses in the area were very few and far between and usually celebrated in the homes of some of the parishioners. Priests came on horseback and were directed to the needs of the people when and where they arose. The arrival of the railroad and the building of government roads led to a gradual increase in the population of the area. Around 1930 thought was given to building a new and larger St. Charles church. Its location was the subject of lively discussions... on the old site at

the cemetery, near the tracks in Mearns, or in the more central location of Alcomdale. In the end, it was Archbishop O'Leary who decided in favor of building two new churches, one at Busby and one at Mearns.

Much of the responsibility for organizing the Busby church fell upon the shoulders of Monsignor Rooney, then pastor of St. Mary's of the Assumption, Westlock. Westlock was part of the Archdiocese of Edmonton until the Diocese of St. Paul was established in 1948. The church was built in large measure by the free labor of the Catholics of the area. Mrs. Margaret Munro was one of the community members who canvassed to raise money for the construction of the Catholic Church. M. Rosaire Fortier of Vimy was the architect and superintendent of construction. William, Russell and Roy Thompson were hired to dig the basement. M. Chateaufort was the stonemason for the foundation, with the help of Mr. Fritz Hesse. Some family names involved in the construction and support needed to build the church were: Charles Buhler, Perrault, Frank Ott Sr., Messenbert, Clement, Lacasse, Masse, Vandaele, Daignault, Devlin, Torrey, Rumba, Schuller, Bellerive, Louch, Letts, Hesse, Stitsen, Holzer, Riopel, Morin, and Heemeryck. Mr. and Mrs. Baert made many donations to the church including the lovely statues that adorned the Sanctuary.

On Sunday March 1, 1931 the new church at Busby was blessed by Archbishop O'Leary and placed under the patronage of St. Anthony whose feast day is June 13. Right Reverend Monsignor Nelligan, V.G., and Father Rooney of Westlock assisted the Archbishop. Solemn mass was sung by Monsignor Nelligan with Father Rooney as deacon and Reverend James Holland, sub-deacon. Present also was Reverend J.L. Stacey, then new pastor of St. Charles parish and in whose pastorate the new



Last Christmas at St. Anthony's Parish – Dec. 1999

mission of Busby was included. His Grace preached in English and in French, congratulating the good parishioners on their splendid new edifice of worship. He particularly referred to the large amount of free labor which was given and extolled the Spirit which prompted the people to give of their time and energy to the doing of God's work in building a house of worship. After the services the ladies of the parish served dinner in the community hall in Busby.

On April 27, 1930 the second Sunday in Easter, Father John L. Stacey was officially appointed parish priest of St. Charles (Mearns), St. Anthony (Busby), and Our Lady of Sion (Lac La Nonne). The first celebration of the Sacrament of First Communion took place on August 3, 1931. The names on file were: Charles Torrey, Kenneth Louch, Gerald Boug, Armand Riopel, Homer Lacasse, Gerald Louch, Mannis Lacasse, Winnifred Rumba, Isabel Rumba, Deloia Lacasse, Annie Lacasse, Mary Barry, and Alice Perrault. The first Baptisms were members of the Rumba family September 19, 1931, along with the Baptisms of Marie Sabourin, Edward Lacasse, John Hesse, and Marie Bellerive. On October 31st of the same year, the first marriage, that of Joseph Albert Turcott and Hilda Lovelock, was solemnized.

On October 2, 1932 the Bishop made his first Pastoral Visitation of the Parish. He conferred the Sacrament of Confirmation and took the opportunity to again compliment the parishioners on their new church. St. Anthony's Church became a mission parish that was served from St. Charles' parish in Mearns. The rectory for the resident priest was also situated in Mearns along with the convent of the School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND) who taught at St. Charles' School.

Over the years a number of changes were made to the church building of St. Anthony. A more

modern furnace in the basement replaced the old barrel stove that used to sit on the main floor of the church. The door to the basement was relocated; it was moved from the east side to below the front steps. The basement was then given a cement floor and this is where the C.W.L. ladies held their parish suppers. Parishioners also enjoyed going from home to home with the organization of C.C.D. (Confraternity of Christian Doctrine) meetings under the direction of Father Gregory. Outings such as these were welcome during the long winter months. Parish priests organized many of the church groups and often motivated the parishioners to volunteer for some of the needed services. They became contacts when a priest needed a ride to the parishes or when there was a special need in the community. Funeral directors from Connelly-McKinley and the parish priest often enlisted the help of Charles Stitsen and Matt Haisan Sr. when funeral arrangements and burial certificates were to be prepared.

The choir at St. Anthony's was always a very committed and eager group. The old pump organ played by Mrs. Susie Clement melodiously led the singers, some of whom were: Henry Stitsen, Tom Logan, Barbara, Jeanette and Mary Hesse, Kay Poltorak, Mr. Robert Rhinehart, Theresa Whitson, Octave Breault, Peter Gabinet, Ernest Schermann, Willie Schnirer, Alfred Schermann, Bert and Joanne Logan as well as Joe Morin and his two daughters. Mary Hesse, Art Morin, and Mary Schermann also played the organ during those years.

Father Merchant was instrumental in acquiring the catechetical and teaching assistance of the School Sisters of Notre Dame who were common visitors to the Busby parish as they began teaching Catechism after mass on Sundays. The rustle of their long black skirts, starched white collars and beads, was a welcome reminder of their presence. Many of the students will remember being taught their lessons over and above the hum of women visiting in the back vestibule while waiting for them. To supplement their teaching many students received correspondence Catechism lessons from the Sisters of Service.

In 1962 and throughout the following years, Vatican II brought many changes within the church. Latin masses were changed to English for the benefit of the laity and new altars faced the people in order to lend an atmosphere of unity and gathering. Lay people were called forth to become more active in parish and Diocesan Advisory bodies. A Christian Youth Organization (C.Y.O.) was organized for youth and Jenny Schnirer acted as youth leader for the parish. Father Ted Rozmahel also took a great interest in the youth of the parishes

and started Young Christian Students (Y.C.S.) and Junior Christian Students (J.C.S.). These were designed for different age groups. He also encouraged Reflection Evenings that helped parishioners share, to a fuller extent, their faith life. The Christopher Course was offered and it assisted lay people in the parish when they became more involved in the Liturgy by taking part in the Sunday readings. The Celebration of the Liturgy began to involve the response of many church members. The local parishes experienced a great loss in the early 70s when the Sisters moved back to the large communities of Edmonton and Ontario. Their expertise in religious instruction had been a great asset to the parishes of Busby and Mearns. Soon after, Parish Councils were organized throughout the area. They consisted of the parish priest, a chairman, secretary, treasurer, youth representative, director of maintenance, liturgy representative and social convener. Parish Council Chairpersons over the years have been: Charlie Stitsen, Ambrose Brenneis, Hank Mensink, Tony Stitsen, Cullen McGillis, Claire Stitsen, Matt Haisan Jr., Pat Terrault, and Marie Bourque.

Treasurers for the Parish Councils have been: Tim and Theresa Whitson, Jenny Schnirer, Charlie Stitsen, Ambrose Brenneis, Debbie Nadeau, Kay Poltorak and Don Case. Before that time, the bookkeeping was done in Mearns by Joan Polokavits. Within the late 70s the first extensive renovations of the interior of the church were carried out. The choir loft, which housed the familiar old pump organ, was enclosed and a new ceiling put in place. The walls and flooring were redone and a new altar with matching furniture was constructed by Clifford Brenneis. New windows replaced the old and stained glass panels were chosen to highlight the top window arches.

Shortly after the Sisters of Notre Dame left, a Catechetical program was set in place by Claire Stitsen and Maxine Munro. A few years later a representative of the Edmonton Archdiocesan Rural Catechetical Team supported them in their work and continued to provide guidance and direction to the Catechists who were involved over the years. Providing Catechesis within the program have been: Maxine Munro, Claire Stitsen, Marlene Gerig, Pat Terrault, Claudette Meunier, Laraine Bourque, Rose Brenneis, Faith Case, Tony Stitsen, Doris Meinczinger, Gloria Dubovsky, Rita Van Roodselaar, Marie Bourque, Elizabeth Belanger, Frances Priest, Joanne Gravel, Jeanette Soetaert and Theresa McRae.

On June 21, 1981 St. Anthony Parish welcomed many of its founding sons and daughters to a

homecoming on the event of its 50th Anniversary. Mass was held at 11:00 A.M. at which many of the past and long term parishioners took part. Later, everyone was treated to lunch at the community hall in Busby and entertained by local talent. Shared memories and rekindled friendships ended a great day of celebration for all.

Annual Fall Suppers continued to be one of the many highlights of St. Anthony Parish. As well, an active Youth Group organized in 1983 boasted of approximately 30 lively members under the leadership of Claire Stitsen and Elizabeth Belanger. Spiritual and personal growth, discussion of moral issues and values, service work, organized fun, and Christmas caroling in the community filled the group's yearly agenda. St. Anthony's Parish also provided the parishioners with family picnics, Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (R.C.I.A.) instruction in the faith, and a Marriage Enrichment Program. Parishioners were involved with the Archdiocese in realizing the Church's overall needs by the formation of a Pastoral Council. Laraine Bourque and Tony Stitsen held that position.

In December of 1988 the parish decided to undertake some interior renovations; wall-to-wall carpeting and a P.A. system were installed as well as a new altar backdrop and draperies.

Throughout the years there was strong support from the many lay people who were actively involved in lay ministries in the church. Helen Whitson, Faye and Brenda Logan, Rose Brenneis, Marlene Gerig, Elizabeth Belanger, Faith Case and Pat Terrault contributed to the music ministry as organists. Mrs. Rumba worked for many years taking care of the vestments, altar linens and church cleaning. Mr. Rumba acted as caretaker of the church. Steve Schuller followed him and faithfully worked at this job for many years. Therese Whitson, Rose Brenneis and then Claire Stitsen, in their turn, have been responsible for the care of the altar linens. The commitment of time and service offered by past and present members has provided the church with a wholesome and caring community atmosphere.

In all certainty, memories are an intricate part of Busby's Faith Community. Young boys will always remember their days as altar servers. Many disliked the gowns that were either far too short or immensely too large. Their memories may also include the strong smell of incense that penetrated the air; the sound of bells at consecration time, and even some of the lengthy sermons for which some pastors were noted. Young girls remember the excitement of joining the choir when they became of age, their new spring bonnets and the fancy summer hats worn by the ladies to Sunday mass. Many men

remember with a smile their small children offering with pride the family church envelope at collection time. Many winters were tough, when snow storms left drifts that prevented parishioners from arriving on time or when the Holy Water would freeze in the font. These memories and the blessings that were shared uplift the faith for many parishioners.

Over the years St. Anthony Church was home to many families and friends. We give special thanks to those who have come and gone before us, those who have so willingly helped build, unselfishly shared, and lovingly passed on the faith to us, the parishioners of St. Anthony of Padua. Sadly, St. Anthony's Parish was closed by the Archdiocese and a farewell mass was held January 12, 2000. Many of the parishioners started to attend the neighboring parish of St. Charles, Mearns while others attend Lac La Nonne, Legal and Westlock. We are happy to now share the St. Charles Fall Supper in the Busby Community Hall where Busby Fall Suppers were held for so many years. Drawing communities together gives strength to all of the organizations we share in.

St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church

By History Committee Members

Namesake of St. Charles Borromeo Parish

St. Charles Borromeo was a bishop and cardinal. Born near Lake Maggiore in 1538; died at Milan in 1584, canonized 1610; feast day November 4.

At the age of 22, while not yet a priest, he was made a cardinal by his uncle, Pope Pius IV and appointed administrator of the vacant see of Milan. The young man was acutely conscious of the needs of the church at that time and took an important part in the final sessions of the reforming Council of Trent. In 1563 he was made priest and bishop, and archbishop of Milan in the following year. He now modified his aristocratic way of living and set himself to apply the principles of the Council of Trent in the reformation of a large diocese that badly needed it. To help remedy the people's religious ignorance he established Sunday schools; seminaries were opened for the training of clergy (he was a benefactor of the English College at Douay); and the dignity of public worship was insisted on.

Borromeo set his clergy as an example of virtuous and selfless living; of caring for the needy and sick; and of making Christ a reality to society. His influence was felt outside his own diocese. During the plague of 1576, in particular, he worked unceasingly for his flock and used up much of his means in relieving sufferers.

St. Charles's uncompromising reforms were not

carried out without opposition, especially from high-placed lay people whose disorderly lives he curbed using stringent measures. Efforts were made to get him removed from office and an attempt was even made to assassinate him by a member of a religious order, the Humiliati, which the archbishop had sought to control.

In his earlier years St. Charles suffered from a speech impediment, which he eventually overcame, but he was not able to preach with ease. Nevertheless he always spoke convincingly and he constantly preached and catechized on his visitations. He was only 46 when he died in the arms of his confessor, a priest from Wales, Dr. Gruffydd Roberts.

St. Charles Borromeo was an outstanding figure among Roman Catholic reformers after the Council of Trent and has been called “another St. Ambrose.” His rigorism in some directions and his imperiousness have not escaped criticism, but his work in the religious education of children was very widely appreciated. Among Walter Savage Landor’s poems is one addressed to St. Charles invoking his pity on Milan at the time of the troubles in 1848.

St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church 1930 –2007

It wasn’t all that long ago that the countryside we presently live in was quite different from what we see today. There were no roads and the open planted fields of the present were thickly covered with poplar and spruce forests. The only people adventurous enough to live here were the Natives and fur trappers. This was a very productive pelt area and in the mid 1800’s a trading post was set up at Egg Lake. The lake was named in honour of the great number of birds that nested around it.



Original St. Charles chapel built in 1902

By the late 1800s surveying of the land north of Edmonton in the Northwest Territories was completed, and the land opened up for settlement. Several years passed before this part of the country drew much attention as there were only two trails through the area. One was the old pack trail to Athabasca Landing, which by 1879 had been widened to accommodate carts and wagons, and the other was the 80 mile pack trail through St. Albert to Fort Assiniboine. Indian trails and new cut lines formed by the railways were also used by the settlers to find and establish their homesteads.

The arrival of the railroad, as well as the efforts of St. Albert district Church authorities to attract groups of settlers to the Territories, helped to speed up the pace of settlement here. When the railroad was extended to the Egg Lake area northwest of Morinville, the nearest train stop was given the name of Mearns. With the arrival of more homesteaders, the focus of the area changed from trading post to village. The first school was made of logs and was situated about where the Egg Lake Coal mine is. As early as 1887 Father Thomas Quévillon taught school and catechism during the week and offered Mass there on Sunday. A very busy man who still found time to spin wool and knit toques, mittens and socks for the children.

The Oblates of Mary Immaculate had been serving the Indian reserve near Riviere Qui Barre, known as St. Alexander Reserve, as early as 1894. These dedicated priests looked after the Natives on the reserve as well as the people of Lac La Nonne, Belvedere, (Pembina River) Mosside, Sandy Lake, Paddle River and Fort Assiniboine. This list of missions indicates how much travelling by horse had to be done and the hardships endured in order for these priests to reach and serve their people.

Sunday masses were few and far between and were usually held in the homes of the parishioners where and when the priest arrived.

The mission of St. Albert obtained from the government the legal right to 40 acres in Sub division 4, Section 34, Township 56, Range 26, West of 4th Meridian for the purpose of a mission site and graveyard. Many pioneer families of our area remember the St. Charles chapel which was built in 1902 under the direction of Reverend Father Gustave Simonin OMI on the east side

of the present graveyard site, a mile west of the Egg Lake school. The chapel, made of donated materials and built by volunteer labour, became the pride of Mearns. The people also built a Rectory for the priest and a small stable for his horse. St. Charles chapel became the hub of the community and the beginning of active faith and church life. Picnics, bazaars and chicken suppers were organized as fundraisers with ball games, horseshoes and races joined in by all.

Many priests in charge of Alexander Indian Reserve also served St. Charles mission.

1894-1900	Rev. Louis Dauphin, o.m.i.
1896	Father Blanchette, o.m.i.
1894; 1900-1905	Rev. Gustave Simonin, o.m.i.
1905-1907	Rev. Ernest Lacombe, o.m.i.
1907-1909	Rev. Joseph Portier, o.m.i.
1907-1914;	
1919-1923;	
1927-1930	Rev. Pierre-Marie LeBré, o.m.i.
1912-1928	Rev. Zéphyrin Lizée, o.m.i.
1924-1927	Rev. Adolphe Watelle, o.m.i.

The original Stations of the Cross were blessed and erected in St. Charles chapel by Father LeBré on December 26, 1915 with the authorization by Archbishop Emile Legal. These stations were given to St. Anthony's Busby parish when the new plaster stations were purchased for St. Charles present church.

On August 25, 1918 Archbishop Legal came to St. Charles to bless a bronze bell weighing 415 pounds, which the parishioners had bought for the price of \$355, an awesome amount of money for those days. The bell was given the name of St. Charles, with Godparents being, Mr. & Mrs. August Forget, Mr. & Mrs. Norman E. Logan, Antoine L'Hirondelle Sr., Doctor Joseph Boulanger, Mr. and Mrs. John L'Hirondelle and Onesime Como. On that same day there was confirmation for six boys and three girls, followed by a parish dinner under a tent. The large attendance and the perfect weather made this day a memorable one for the community. This beautiful bell with its rich tone is presently housed in the tower of St. Charles Borromeo church in Mearns and is still rung with pride today.

Reverend Father LeBré gave the following statistics in his 1913 annual report. St. Charles (Egg Lake) had:

- 37 French Canadians
- 5 Scottish



The ladies of Mearns, ready for a chicken supper social and fundraiser in the early 1900's (held in the first mission church built in 1902). They wore serviette "hats" because the event was held in the church. Mrs. Joseph Ricard is the lady in the front dressed in black. Others in the photo are Aline Pare, Alma Rottot, Irene Logan, Mrs. Poulin and Mrs Fortier

23 English speaking Metis

68 French speaking Metis

for a total of 133 Catholics in this area. Lac La Nonne – 147; Belvedere (Pembina) – 26; Mosside – 36; Paddle River – 43; Sandy Lake – 19 families; and Fort Assiniboine – 16 families. In 1924 Reverend Watelle noted that there had been chapels built in all four missions, St. Alexander Reserve, Mearns (Egg Lake), Lac La Nonne and Sandy Lake.

Research of the early missionary Oblate journals at the Provincial Archives turned up the following bits of information on St. Charles church in the early years when Fr. Simonin and Fr. Lizée would come from Lac Ste-Anne twice a month to say Mass in Mearns.

Fr. Simonin's notes

Many times he mentions the winters being very windy and very cold. Most entries just note that he went to say Mass at St. Charles that particular Sunday, which occurred once or twice a month.

- Oct. 30, 1903 – Fr. Hays came to work at the new St. Charles church



Blessing of the Bell – St. Charles Church, Mearns

- Aug. 1905 – small paper note by Fr. Simonin indicating annual donations made by the following parishioners: Th. Nobert – \$6, Brault – \$20 (very generous for that time), E. Como – \$5, N. Logan – \$5.
- Oct. 1905 – notation by Fr. Simonin that he and P. Marchant worked at finishing the stable for the cows.

Fr. Lizée's notes

- Jan. 1, 1911 – extreme cold at -50°F... he is at Lac Ste-Ann.
- Sept. 9, 1917 – raffle held at St. Charles to buy a church bell priced at \$140. Mr. Ricard and Mr. Ant. Lirondelle were put in charge. Mr. Ricard collected \$50 and Mr. Lirondelle collected \$90.
- Nov. 25, 1917 – mass at St. Charles... collected \$55 for the bell... now have \$230.60.
- May 26, 1918 – Mass at St. Charles – bells arrived.
- June 5, 1918 – 40 young people took the train from Morinville to go to Calgary to do military service... 10 were from the RQB area... visit this evening by Mr. Nat. Logan, his son, Norman, son-in-law, Tobie Cunningham and Mr. Cameron (teacher) from St. Charles. They wanted copies of their marriage certificates in order to be exempt from military service.
- Nov/Dec. 1918 – Flu epidemic (Spanish Influenza) in Northern Alberta... all public offices/services are cancelled. Fr. Lizée was sick himself... many died... son of Ant. L'Hirondelle (Jr) died of the epidemic... Allan, son of George Moore, died of the epidemic.
- Population of St. Charles at the end of 1919: 28 families – population 137... 53 French, 5 English, 15 German, 62 Metis and 2 Belgium.
- Mar. 28, 1921 – Fr. Lizée notes that he forgot to mention that last Sunday, Nov. 20, 1921, he visited the new Coal Mine, newly opened by the nephew of Mr. Nat Logan, Bob Logan. He started mid-August of last year to open this mine on the land of his uncle, ¼ mile from the house. He removed some 10 feet of dirt from a portion of the bank. The coal find is approximately 12 by 15 yards, spread out on a large ledge. They have already recovered 7 to 8 yards of this find. The coal is as good as the one from the Cardiff mine near Morinville. They are selling it for \$3 a ton. This is .50 cents less than the Morinville mine. They are selling 12 to 15 tons per day. Mr. Nat Logan receives .25 cents per ton on the sale. It is a very good return. He pays only .5 cents per ton to the government for exploitation. We hope they make a fortune.
- Dec. 18, 1921 – Fr. Lizée writes: "It is very cold (-24°F) but I went with Fr. LeBré to say Mass at St.

Charles by buggy. I was very cold on the way there, especially my feet."

- Dec. 26, 1921 – Fr. Lizée writes, "It is extremely cold, at -54°F"
- Sunday, Jan. 8, 1922 – Fr. Lizée writes, "I was so happy to see Fr. LeBré return from St. Charles. He has been away since Friday visiting a part of his parish. I was equally happy to see he had collected \$100.00 from his visit to help buy some chairs and beds for the rectory."

Excerpt from *History of the Catholic Church in Central Alberta* – By Rev. Emile J. Legal, omi

The Mission of St. Charles (Egg Lake P.O.)

West of St. Emile parish, a small church has been built, about the same size as St. Joseph's church of Spruce Grove 1900, on a legal subdivision obtained from the government, but the number of Catholics has never been large enough to require a resident priest. The mission has always been attended to from the neighboring Indian Reserve of RQB by Reverend Fathers Dauphin, omi, Portier, Simonin, and lastly, 1914, by Reverend Fathers LeBré and Lizée, omi.

In 1923 Bishop H.J. O'Leary called upon Reverend John Louis Stacey, a young cleric from Woodstock, Ontario who studied theology at St. Peter's seminary in London, Ontario. Father Stacey had been ordained to the priesthood on October 2, 1921 at St. Anthony's Pro-Cathedral in Edmonton and the Archbishop requested him to become a traveling missionary here. He had to visit a large number of missions such as Whitecourt, Greencourt, Mayerthorpe, Sangudo, Cherhill, Glenevis and Onoway – having his residence in Whitecourt from 1923 until 1927 then in Onoway until 1930. On April 27, 1930 Father John Stacey was officially appointed as parish priest to St. Charles in Mearns, St. Anthony's in Busby and Our Lady of Sion in Lac La Nonne.

At this time thought was given to building a new and larger St. Charles church. However, its location

was the subject of many lively discussions; should it be on the old site at the cemetery, near the railroad tracks in Mearns or in the more central location of Alcomdale? Finally the decision was made by Archbishop O'Leary that two churches would be built, one at Mearns and one at Busby. And



Mr. Joseph Ricard donated the land to build the church

so it was. The contract for the church was with the Poirier Bros and was signed on June 30, 1930 for the sum of \$7,864.00. On August 16 work on the new church began on two acres of land donated by Joseph Ricard, NE 1/4 28-56-26-W4.

Just two months later on October 19, 1930 Bishop O'Leary blessed the building and declared the church open for Divine worship under the title of St. Charles Borromeo. St. Anthony's of Padua church in Busby was blessed five months later on March 1, 1931. The rectory from the graveyard was moved adjacent to the church and became home to Father Stacey and many priests after him.

1930-1935	Rev. John Louis Stacey
1935-1941	Rev. Joseph Fay
1941-1953	Rev. Raymond Merchant
1953-1962	Rev. Christian Rijniers

Father Stacey's first baptism was Robert Joseph Massie, son of Alfred and Mary (nee Kluthe) Massie, who was born on June 17 and baptized June 22, 1930. His Godparents were Paul and Mary Hermanutz. The first marriage ceremony took place in the new church on October 29, 1930 for Henry Altmiks, son of Aloysius Altmiks and Louisa (nee Kluthe) Altmiks and Mary Sarah Lamoureux, daughter of Hermis Lamoureux and Rose Anne (nee Donlan) Lamoureux. Witnesses were Mary Lamoureux and A. Altmiks.



Father Stacey with Noel Ricard

On January 1, 1931 the envelope system of collections was begun to ensure an income for the maintenance of the church and rectory. The ladies of the parish looked after altar linens, cleaning of the church and rectory and fund raising events such as chicken suppers and bazaars to raise needed funds for the parish and community. In those first years, the ladies sold baking and homemade goods at the Edmonton market in the summer. They were able to

purchase fabrics and sewed cassocks, surpluses and altar linens for the church, purchased cleaning supplies needed for the church and rectory and dishes, silverware, tablecloths, and tea towels to be used for socials and picnics. It was a busy and productive time for this little community.

On September 17, 1935, Father John Stacey suffered a massive heart attack and died at the wheel of his car near the General Hospital in Edmonton. His funeral was in Mearns, with burial in the church cemetery. He was only 38 years old and his passing was a big blow to this Catholic community.

Reverend Joseph Fay was then named Pastor of Mearns and Busby, which he served from 1935 until 1941. Father Fay was born on August 13, 1899 in St. George's, Prince Edward Island. He studied at the Grand Seminary in Quebec then came to Edmonton where he was ordained by Archbishop Louis James O' Leary on July 30, 1924 for the Edmonton diocese. He served in Hanna and Daysland before coming to the Mearns/ Busby area. He died January 19, 1941. His funeral mass was held in Mearns and his body was sent back to Newport, P.E.I. for burial.

Reverend Raymond Joseph Merchant, who was born on Calumet Island, Quebec and studied theology at St. Joseph's seminary, was ordained to the priesthood back home in Quebec on June 23, 1935 for the Edmonton diocese. He was Assistant at St. Anthony's in Edmonton and Chaplain of the University of Alberta Hospital for six years before becoming Pastor of Mearns and Busby parishes in 1941 where he served until 1953.



Fr. John Stacey



Father Merchant – 1950

During Father Merchant's time in Mearns he managed to pay off the mortgage, install new pews and Stations of the Cross and saw many changes happen in the area.

In August 1948 the Department of Education decided it would be profitable to join together the small country schools of Belle Valley, Tellier and Egg Lake. The plan of the department was to move the two-room Belle Valley School to Mearns and teach all three former schools at the centralized school, which would be renamed St. Charles. The people asked Father Merchant if it would be possible to have nuns as teachers, since the majority of the students were Catholic. On August 27, 1948 Sister Mary Edward, Sister Henrita, and Sister Clovis arrived in Mearns with Mother Provincial Pius. The Sisters of Notre Dame boarded with local families at first. In September, the Sisters were ready to begin teaching, but the Belle Valley School had not yet been moved into Mearns, so the Sturgeon School Board requested them to begin their teaching at the one room Egg Lake School. This was a very difficult time; the building was in poor condition and heated by a single large stove. Both teachers had to do their instruction in the one classroom. However, in spite of the hardships the students and teachers had to endure, the enrollment doubled within the first two weeks from 26 to 52 students.

On October 24, the Egg Lake School was closed and the next day teachers, students, furniture and school supplies were transported to St. Charles. The Sisters moved into the Rectory with Father Merchant so they could be close to the school, until their new Convent was completed. By October 28 enrolment increased to 84 students ranging from grades one to ten.

The School Sisters of Notre Dame taught at St. Charles until June of 1969 when centralization to Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre came about. They then returned to their Mother House in Waterdown, Ontario. Since the school was no longer

required, the building was sold to the community as a hall and it served the area well for many years.

In 1950 Father Merchant was instrumental in establishing the CWL in St. Charles Borromeo parish. This organization continues to be an important part of parish life in Mearns. Its members are still

responsible for the cleaning of the church, maintenance of altar linens, fund raising for parish needs with the annual fall supper and supporting the catechism and youth programs, visiting the sick, both at home and in hospital and hosting the Monday morning prayer group. The CWL is also active with the World's Day of Prayer and host this event every four years. The members can be found actively participating in the liturgy, singing in the choir and as readers and Eucharistic ministers.

Father Merchant left Mearns in 1953 to become pastor of St. Agnes Parish in Edmonton and was replaced by Father Christian John Rijniers, fondly known as Fr. Gregory. Fr. Rijniers was born in Holland, Sept 2, 1913 and studied theology there. He was ordained May 8, 1938 in Mook, Holland for the Passionist fathers. From 1938 to 1941 he was a professor at the minor seminary in Nijenegen, Holland and worked as a chaplain for the rest of the war years. He came to Edmonton in 1950 and remained a chaplain for Dutch immigrants until he



Catechism classes offered in the parish hall



Father Gregory at "Crowning of Mary Procession" (note communion railing)



Fr. Raymond Merchant

was appointed Pastor of Mearns/Busby from 1953 to 1962. Many of us can recall family visits with Father Gregory and the numerous stories he shared about his encounters as a young priest/chaplain during the war years. Following Fr. Gregory's appointment as Pastor to Provost/Lacombe in 1963, we have been blessed to have many Parish Priests.



Confirmation – 1955. Father Gregory and Archbishop Anthony Jordon with the children

1962-1963	Rev. Martin Volk
1963-1966	Rev. Henry Peet
1966-1969	Rev. Theodore Rozmahel
1969	Rev. MacDougall
1969-1970	Rev. Michael McCaffery
1970-1973	Rev. Joseph E. McGrane (St. Charles' last resident priest. He was in residence until his death Oct. 13, 1976)

Spiritual Fathers from Villeneuve who served St. Charles Mission

1973-1975	Rev. John Cunningham, C.S.Sp.
1975-1978	Rev. Hugh Roche, C.S.Sp.
1978-1987	Rev. Francis Laverty, C.S.Sp.

Diocesan clergy from Villeneuve who served St. Charles Mission

1987-1994	Rev. Karol Zynel
1994-1995	Rev. A. MacKenzie
1995-2003	Rev. Paul Terrio
2003-2005	Rev. Jan Sobkowicz
2005-2006	Rev. Oscar Monroy
Dec. 2006...	Rev. Wellington Santana



Father Joseph McGrane



Father Theodore Rozmahel



First Communion Group – 1992. Back to front: Father Zynel, Jenna Kieser, Sheldon Watson, Matthew Granger, Marc Bailey, Paul Kirvan, Steven Whitson, Mark Kluthe, Nicole Riopel, Brian Lutz, Arlene Whitson, Dawn Kirvan

After 75 years, St. Charles Borromeo church was declared an historic site in 1992 and the church basement was completely redone, with hours and hours of volunteer labour, to serve as our Parish and community hall.

In preparation for the 75th anniversary of our parish, the interior of the church was repainted. The altar and confessional areas were completely



Terry Whitson, Morris DeRudder and Allan Gaudreault, some of the many volunteers involved in the reconstruction of the church basement and future parish hall



Marvin Brenneis removing dirt and debris from the reconstruction site



St. Charles Church after interior renovations of 2005



75th Anniversary – 2005. Parishioners 50 years in St. Charles Parish



St. Charles Borromeo Church – 2007



Confirmation 2006 – Archbishop Thomas Collins (center) and the Confirmation class of March 12, 2006. Father Oscar is on the far right, catechist Courtney Palmer is in the back. St. Charles Church, Mearns

*There was a time, not too long ago,
His House needed some repair.
Here's our thanks to everyone
for all the time you spared*

*Thanks to all of those who hammered,
the nails were gone so fast.
Good thing Chris figured out -
"Without nails this crew won't last!"*

*Thank you for the buns and treats,
the coffee always brewin'.
Next thing we knew the whole darn crew
was a slurpin' and a chewin'*

*Thanks to the ladies that spread the wax,
who did the washing and the moppin'.
There came a Friday night in June
this place was really hoppin'*

*Thanks to all of you who said
"I'd like to make a donation"
We never knew a pencil could move
so fast to make a notation*

*So thanks to all who helped us out,
those who came out, those who prayed.
By effort and the Grace of God
we got that tile layed!*



Souvenir de Première Communion

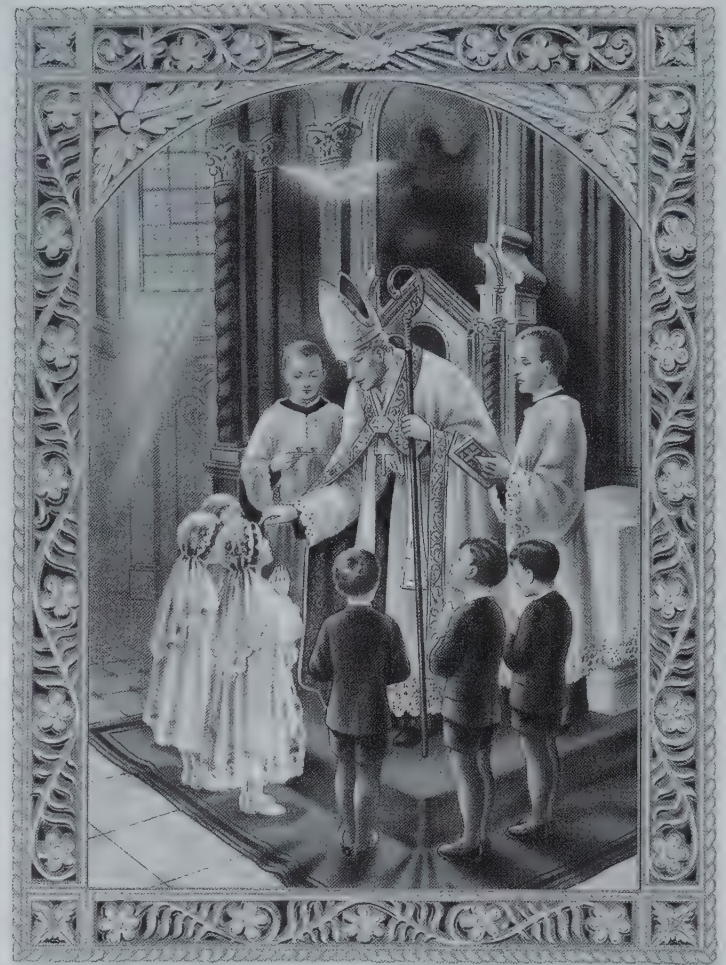
Nom Marie Elizabeth Lucille Robert
 Baptisé le 8 octobre 1944 admis à la Communion le 20 mai 1951
 dans l'Eglise de St. Charles, Mearns, Alta et confirmé le 11 août 1953
R.J. Merchant Cure

Certificate of First Communion issued by Fr. R.J. Merchant in 1951

remodeled, and new flooring installed around the altar. We were also able to incorporate the original altar and other furnishings, which were returned to us from the Morinville Museum. New altar linens, banners and vestments, in all liturgical colors, were also purchased for our mass celebrations.

In 2005 St. Charles Borromeo marked 75 years as a parish with an anniversary mass celebrated by Archbishop Thomas Collins and Father Jan Sobkowicz. A parish dinner followed and much fellowship took place with friends and family who returned to Mearns especially for this occasion. Rain cancelled the planned outdoor activities but not the enthusiasm and enjoyment of those who moved indoors to continue their visiting.

From the time the first little mission church was begun until present day, parish life and sense of community and family has been the hub of life in Mearns, with the church being its center.



Leonard Robert Baptisé le 1 jour d'août 1943
 a été Confirmé le 11 jour d'août 1953 en l'église
St. Charles à Mearns, Alberta
R.J. Merchant Cure

Certificate of Confirmation issued by Fr. R.J. Merchant in 1953

Over the years many changes have taken place at St. Charles Parish. Since Vatican II the laity has taken an active part in the Liturgies. A Parish Council along with ministerial duties which include Catechists, Eucharistic Ministers, Readers, Music Ministry, and Sacramental Preparation are lay led. The community uses the church basement for Knights of Columbus breakfasts, C.W.L. suppers and meetings, youth activities, senior floor curling, and family celebrations. St. Charles welcomed the parish of St. Anthony's of Padua, Busby when it closed 2000.

This small church is a solitary landmark as you drive between Highway #2 and Highway #44. Its steeple beckons all to visit and feel welcome. Much of the area's history and warm memories are contained within its walls. This building has brought the blessing of peace and solace to all its visitors and members.

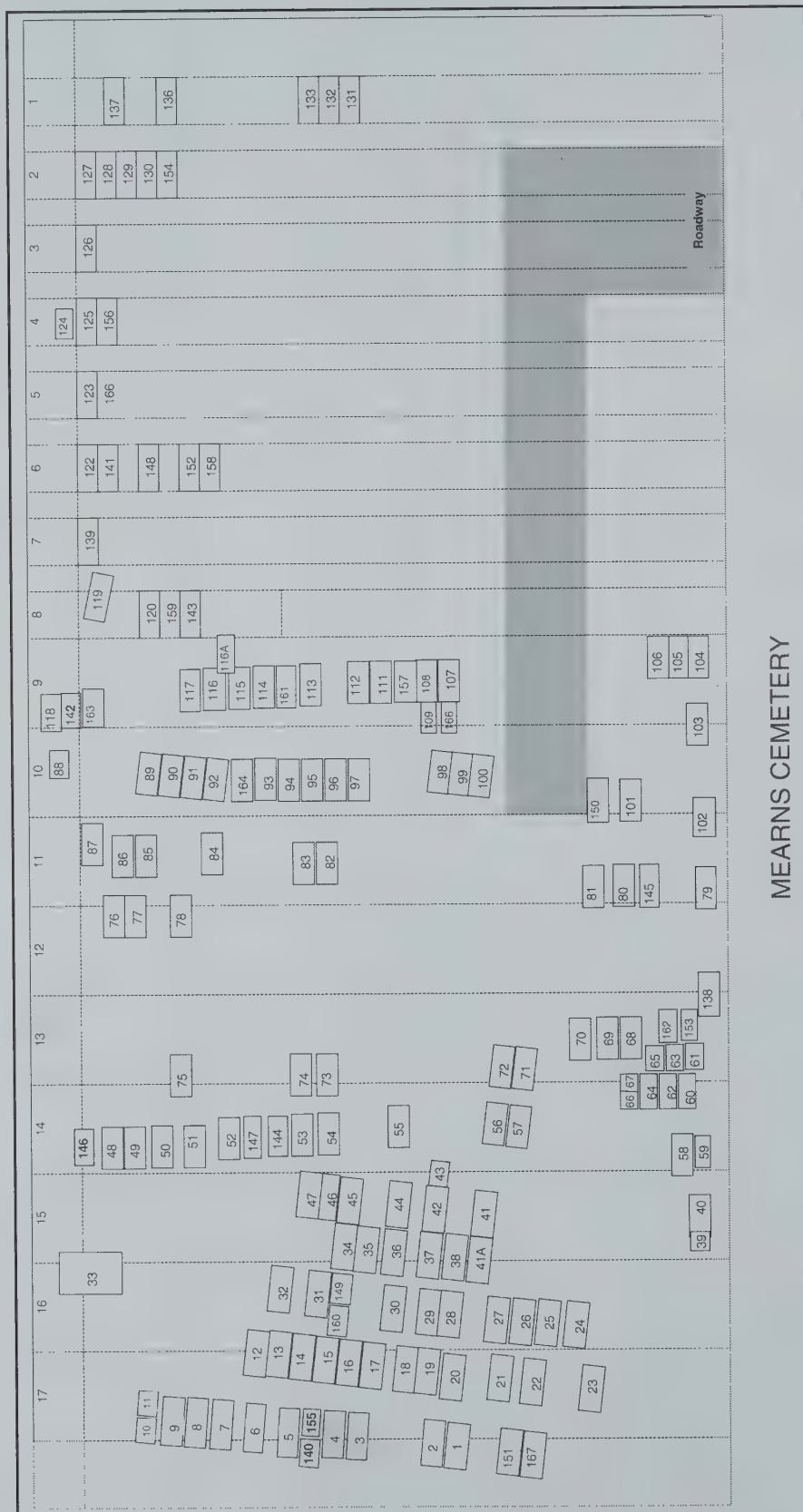
At Rest in the Mearns Cemetery

Name	Date of Death	Age	Plot	Row
1 Altmiks, Alvin	October 6, 1981	78 yrs	137	1
2 Beaudry, Hippolyte	July 24, 1945	74 yrs	1	17
3 Beaudry, Lucie	October 31, 1926	52 yrs		unmarked
4 Beaudry, Narciss-Wilfred	July 28, 1906	4 mo		unmarked
5 Beaulieu, Catherine Marie	July 29, 1906	3yrs		unmarked
6 Beaulieu, Jean-Baptiste	July 10, 1903	20 yrs	23	17
7 Belisle, Marie (Spouse of Joseph Tailleur)	July 1, 1932		25	16
8 Bent, Robert William	September 19, 1999	2 hrs	146	14
9 Boddez, Denis	July 8, 1958	8 yrs	99	10
10 Boddez, Edgar	June 15, 1905	49 yrs	107	9
11 Boddez, Helina	October 12, 1951	5 days	100	10
12 Boddez, Joseph K (ashes)	April 27th, 2007	53 yrs	107	9
13 Boddez, Rita	July 8, 1958	9 yrs	99	10
14 Borle, Marie Anne (wife of John L'Hirondelle)	October 31, 1918	20 yrs		unmarked
15 Bouchard, Lionel	June 3, 1915	15 yrs	13	16/17
16 Bouchard, Marie	April 3, 1920	48 yrs	32	16
17 Bouchard, Marie Deleme	August 31, 1907	16 mo	12	16
18 Boytzun-Bowman, Iris Pearl (ashes)	October 7, 1992	56 yrs	124	4
19 Brenneis, Lawrence	November 13, 2005	85 yrs	124	9
20 Brenneis, Louise Doreen	March 4, 2001	61 yrs	124	6
21 Brenneis, Theresa Mary	May 18, 1972	47 yrs	114	9
22 Brenneis, Vivian (ashes)	November 23, 1999	63 yrs	148	6
23 Brown, Lucie Edna	June 12, 1921	5 mo	79	11/12
24 Bruxelles, Alphonse	April 25, 1905			unmarked
25 Bugnet, baby	November 12, 1951	at birth		unmarked
26 Byer, Anthony N	June 4, 1905	59 yrs	113	9
27 Byer, Elizabeth	February 24, 1932	2 yrs	116A	9
28 Byer, Lawrence	March 6, 1933	87 yrs	96	10
29 Byer, Maria	December 12, 1976	83 yrs	97	10
30 Byer, Mary	March 12, 1940	88 yrs	95	10
31 Byer, Mary	December 14, 1970	78 yrs	116	9
32 Byer, Morris	February 5, 1932	16 yrs		unmarked
33 Byer, Morris	April 16, 1905	17 yrs	93	10
34 Byer, Morris	May 15, 1905	84 yrs	94	10
35 Byer, Nicholas	April 17, 1968	83 yrs	115	9
36 Carrier, Onesime	September 28, 1941	67 yrs	89	10
37 Clausen, Lorraine (Ricard)	September 20, 1988	42 yrs	125	4
38 Cloutier, Philippe	August 28, 1948	20 yrs	75	13/14
39 Courtoreille, Norbert	July 19, 1903	30 yrs		unmarked
40 Cunningham, Mary Alice	April 24, 1904	3 mo	22	17
41 Cunningham, Olive Gertrude	February 15, 1921	6 yrs	26	16
42 Cyr, Marie Florence	December 19, 1942	7 mo		unmarked
43 Davenport, Jean Bapiste	October 30, 2005	at birth	160	15
44 DeRudder, Emile A	November 22, 1973	46 yrs	111	9
45 DeRudder, Mary	March 8, 2004	76 yrs	157	9
46 DeRudder, Mary Ann	September 22, 1993	32 yrs	112	9
47 Domino, Anthony (Tony)	April 3, 1999	74 yrs	143	8
48 Domino, Michael Pete	May 30, 1953	1 mo	101	10/11
49 Dziedusiewicz, Dymetro	May 24, 1958	60 yrs	74	13/14
50 Eweesye, baby (William Lirondelle)	September 27, 1937	at birth		unmarked
51 Gagnon, Francis	January 14, 1924	16 days		unmarked
52 Gibeau, Antoinette	1927	at birth	138	12/13
53 Gibeau, Leonard J.	August 20, 1935	1 yr	138	12/13
54 Gore, Helen B.	March 9, 1976	88 yrs	117	9
55 Gravel, Jeffery (Jeff)	May 17, 1986	24 yrs	136	1
56 Gravelle, William Joseph	October 22, 1932	6 days		unmarked
57 Halle, James (ashes)	May 30, 2005	91 yrs	164	10
58 Halle, George	May 13, 1934	48 yrs	91	10
59 Halle, Joseph David	May 25, 1932	29 yrs	92	10
60 Halle, Lea	December 1, 1955	71 yrs	90	10
61 Harrington, baby	May 22, 1932	at birth		unmarked
62 Hayduk, Donald Edward (ashes)	1978	19 yrs	11	17
63 Hermanutz, Alfred B.	June 10, 1905	61 yrs	122	6
64 Hermanutz, Rita Marie	August 25, 1940	at birth		unmarked
65 Hermanutz, Valerie	May 24, 2005	50 yrs	158	6

66	Hermanutz, Violet M. (ashes)	June 20, 1905	68 yrs	141	6
67	Hesse, Manfred Wolfgang Hesse (ashes)	November 11, 2002	39 yrs	154	2
68	Hittinger, Patrick	March 8, 1997	63 yrs	120	8
69	Hittinger, Sophia	September 21, 2005	70 yrs	159	8
70	Houle, Joseph Alphonse	May 14, 1985	75 yrs	105	9
71	Houle, Joseph Omer Simon	December 3, 1975	36 yrs	106	9
72	Houle, Maria Gertrude	April 2, 1966	65 yrs	104	9
73	Houle, Victor	June 29, 1920	2 yrs		unmarked
74	Jaworski, Joseph	September 1, 1943	46 yrs	73	13/14
75	Kieser, Robert J (Robbie)	June 27, 1990	3½ yrs	123	5
76	Kieser, Robert P.	March 20th, 2007	83 yrs	165	5
77	Kluthe, Aloys	August 30, 1969	70 yrs	50	14
78	Kluthe, August	February 21, 1983	77 yrs	49	14
79	Kluthe, baby	January 24, 1936	at birth		unmarked
80	Kluthe, Bradley	April 8, 1962	5 days	98	10
81	Kluthe, Emma M.	June 16, 1943	33 yrs	54	14
82	Kluthe, Helena Mary	May 1, 1999	89 yrs	144	14
83	Kluthe, John Joseph	October 31, 1998	69 yrs	139	7
84	Kluthe, Joseph	July 13, 1963	62 yrs	53	14
85	Kluthe, Josephine	June 13, 1905	79 yrs	48	14
86	Kluthe, Therse	February 10, 1946	53 yrs	51	14
87	Ksiazek, Mary	May 10, 1905	51 yrs	70	13
88	Lalonde, Elsie Elizabeth (ashes)	May 25, 1996	77 yrs	39	15
89	Lalonde, Marlene Mary	October 18, 1953	6 yrs	59	14
90	Lalonde, Paul Napoleon	January 24, 1996	78 yrs	40	15
91	Lamereaux, Joseph (Harmass)	February 27, 1955	83 yrs	82	11
92	Lamoureux, Roxanne (Rosan N.)	November 3, 1943	65 yrs	83	11
93	Le Blanc, baby	September 7, 1940	at birth		unmarked
94	Leclercq, baby	April 9, 1955	at birth		unmarked
95	L'Hirondelle, Auguste	July 19, 1926	45 yrs	2	17
96	L'Hirondelle, Bertus Harold Raymond	February 21, 1932	11 mo		unmarked
97	L'Hirondelle, Eddie	September 22, 1944		31	16
98	L'Hirondelle, Elisabeth	March 31, 1926	41 yrs		unmarked
99	L'Hirondelle, Ernest A.	June 1, 1922	3 mo	14	16/17
100	L'Hirondelle, James W.	July 6, 1903	3 yrs	28	16
101	L'Hirondelle, Jean-Baptiste Elzear	October 24, 1918	14 mo	38	15/16
102	L'Hirondelle, John-Baptist	October 8, 1915	59 yrs	18	16/17
103	L'Hirondelle, Josue Jimmy [Napoleon]	June 23, 1922	13 yrs	41A	15/16
104	L'Hirondelle, Justine	February 12, 1909		20	17
105	L'Hirondelle, Lucy (Mrs. Anthony)	January 2, 1929	44 yrs	41	15
106	L'Hirondelle, Marie	February 18, 1920	48 yrs		unmarked
107	L'Hirondelle, Mary Anne	October 31, 1918	19 yrs	29	16
108	L'Hirondelle, Patrice-Joseph	April 18, 1910	3 yrs		unmarked
109	L'Hirondelle, Patrick Archibald	June 3, 1922	2 yrs		unmarked
110	L'Hirondelle, Victor	January 4, 1935	24 yrs	6	17
111	L'Hirondelle, Zephyr	July 22, 1928	32 yrs	5	17
112	L'Hyronde, Elize	November 24, 1899	38 yrs	19	16/17
113	Lirondelle, Anthony (Antoine)	September 2, 1939	70 yrs	3	17
114	Lirondelle, baby	August 29, 1939	15 mo		unmarked
115	Lirondelle, Denise R (Rottot)	June 18, 1905	80 yrs	9	17
116	Lirondelle, Elie Patrick	January 27, 2001	86 yrs	151	17
117	Lirondelle, Grace M. (Unger) (ashes)	June 16, 1905	57 yrs	10	17
118	Lirondelle, John	February 10, 1933	53 yrs		unmarked
119	Lirondelle, Joseph	September 21, 1945	at birth		unmarked
120	Lirondelle, Joseph Napoleon	August 1, 1906	6 mo	16	16/17
121	Lirondelle, Josephine (ashes)	November 27, 2002	92 yrs	155	17
122	Lirondelle, Julia Lawrence (Julienne)	January 22, 1938	71 yrs	7	17
123	Lirondelle, Louise H.	October 1, 2007	87 yrs	166	17
124	Lirondelle, Mack A.	June 9, 1905	79 yrs	8	17
125	Lirondelle, Mrs. Antoine	October 21, 1926	51 yrs	4	17
126	Lirondelle, Paddy J.	March 24, 1905	3 yrs	15	16/17
127	Lirondelle, Robert (ashes)	July 31, 1998	76 yrs	140	17
128	Lirondelle, William-Janvier	October 23, 1904	11 mo	17	16/17
129	Logan, Albert Edward	June 4, 1957	51 yrs	45	15
130	Logan, Alfred J.	April 10, 1934	52 yrs	35	15/16
131	Logan, Annie Florence	December 31, 1918	12 yrs	27	16
132	Logan, Arthur Joseph (ashes)	June 12, 1905	74 yrs	61	13
133	Logan, Delia Jean (LaCasse) (ashes)	June 16, 1905	72 yrs	61	13

134	Logan, Dorothy B.	February 13, 1930	3 yrs	60	13/14
135	Logan, George	August 26, 1908	6 mo	21	17
136	Logan, Grace Agnes	September 12, 1950	4 mo	64	13/14
137	Logan, Joseph Clifford	March 29, 1924	5 mo	37	15/16
138	Logan, Joseph Thomas	December 28, 1930	17 days	62	13/14
139	Logan, Louise Ann	May 3, 1939	56 yrs	34	15/16
140	Logan, Mary (Cunningham) (ashes)	May 28, 1905	81 yrs	66	13/14
141	Logan, Maurice Daniel (ashes)	April 30, 2001	78 yrs	153	13
142	Logan, Norman Nathaniel	February 4, 1954	66 yrs	67	13/14
143	Logan, Robert Joseph (ashes)	September 16, 2003	50 yrs	162	13
144	Logan, Samuel (ashes)	January 8, 1998	72 yrs	61	13
145	Logan, Thomas (ashes)	November 25, 1999	85 yrs	149	16
146	Logan, Walter Francis (ashes)	June 2, 1905	25 yrs	65	13
147	Majeau, Carolie	September 29, 1950	81 yrs	84	11
148	Marechal, Paschal	May 24, 1932	96 yrs	87	11
149	Massie, Alfred John	August 22, 1962	62 yrs	132	1
150	Massie, Annie	December 31, 1997	97 yrs	131	1
151	Massie, Shane	March 19, 1996	25 yrs	133	1
152	Meyer, Elizabeth	September 10, 1945	47 yrs	52	14
153	Meyer, John	November 15, 1999	103 yrs	147	14
154	Mitchell, David	September 23, 1987	6 mo	128	2
155	Mitchell, Donald (ashes)	May 30, 2006	71 yrs	163	9
156	Mitchell, Joseph W.	July 25, 1979	17 yrs	118	9/10
157	Mitchell, Yvonne (ashes)	June 20, 1905	63 yrs	142	9
158	Moore, Allan	November 1, 1918	18 yrs	33	15/16
159	Moore, George Amos	October 28, 1944	76 yrs	24	16
160	Moore, Mary Jane	December 15, 1942		33	15/16
161	Nadeau, Joseph Paul (nothing on stone)	May 24, 1960	76 yrs	88	10
162	Neault, Charles Joseph	November 1, 1902	1 year		unmarked
163	Nobert, Telesphore (Walter J.)	July 7, 1937	57 yrs	56	14
164	Nobert, Alice	May 18, 1998	80 yrs	71	13/14
165	Nobert, baby	June 21, 1932	birth	43	15
166	Nobert, Ezilda (Mrs. Frank)	June 21, 1932	25 yrs	42	15
167	Nobert, Frederic M.	March 31, 1996	82 yrs	72	13/14
168	Nobert, Urbanie	December 12, 1951	68 yrs	57	14
169	Page, Joseph Marie	March 26, 1903	13 days		unmarked
170	Page, Lucie	June 15, 1929	46 yrs		unmarked
171	Page, Virginie Eveline	September 8, 1907			unmarked
172	Pellissier, Henrie W.	January 21, 1961	52 yrs		unmarked
173	Piton, Adrien J.	April 28, 1947	66 yrs	78	11/12
174	Poirier, Germaine Marie	December 1, 1930	7 days	36	15/16
175	Polakovits, Agnes	June 13, 1999	94 yrs	145	11
176	Polakovits, John Francis	January 17, 2000	66 yrs	150	11
177	Polakovits, Mary	June 20, 1964	20 yrs	81	11/12
178	Polakovits, Steve	November 16, 1974	74 yrs	80	11/12
179	Poltorak, Anna	December 15, 1986	85 yrs	69	13
180	Poltorak, Stefan	March 2, 1954	62 yrs	68	13
181	Racine, baby	September 20, 1928	at birth		unmarked
182	Racine, Virginie	July 13, 1920	2 mo		unmarked
183	Remillard, Delina [Del] (ashes)	October 16, 1996	63 yrs	109	9
184	Ricard, Emile Octavien	December 31, 2002	83 yrs	156	4
185	Riopel, Blanche	1989	80 yrs	108	9
186	Rondeau, Joseph	June 7, 1919	4 mo		unmarked
187	Rottot, Arthur	October 18, 1942	78 yrs	85	11
188	Rottot, Rosalie	May 23, 1962	84 yrs	86	11
189	Ruchinsky, John	April 2, 1942	46 yrs		unmarked
190	Saffin, Gordon	December 13, 1933	at birth	30	16
191	Savard, Marie- Rose	March 17, 1904	10 mo		unmarked
192	Savard, Theodore	January 26, 1905	45 yrs		unmarked
193	Schafers, Emma	January 10, 2006	76 yrs	130	2
194	Schafers, Henry J.	September 14, 1990	66 yrs	129	2
195	Schafers, Marie (Pinky)	May 25, 1986	31 yrs	127	2
196	Sheehan, Darrell Joseph	November 20, 1995	39 yrs	58	14
197	Stacey, Rev. John Louis (first pastor)	September 17, 1935	38 yrs	55	14
198	Tailleur, infant	September 6, 1930	at birth		unmarked
199	Taurengeau, Flora	June 11, 1918	30 yrs		unmarked
200	Taurengeau, Louis	November 7, 1918	76 yrs		unmarked
201	Van Hove, Charles J.	December 21, 1968	67 yrs	119	8

202	Vandaele, Leon	August 9, 1953	48 yrs	102	10/11
203	Vandal, Georgina (Mrs Leo)	February 8, 1935	25 yrs	44	15
204	Vandal, Wilfred	March 29, 1923	8 mo		unmarked
205	Vandenhouten, Andrew	August 7, 1945	1 mo	77	11/12
206	Vandenhouten, Maria	April 15, 1944	59 yrs	76	11/12
207	Vandermeulen, Terry Glenn	June 8, 1905	22 yrs	126	3
208	Ward, Emilien	July 19, 1903	35 yrs		unmarked
209	Ward, Peter	March 12, 1903	66 yrs		unmarked
210	Ward, Rosalie	April 28, 1915	74 yrs		unmarked
211	Wills, William	January 1, 1942	7 mo		unmarked
212	Wulff, Herbert J.	June 9, 1905	73 yrs	47	15



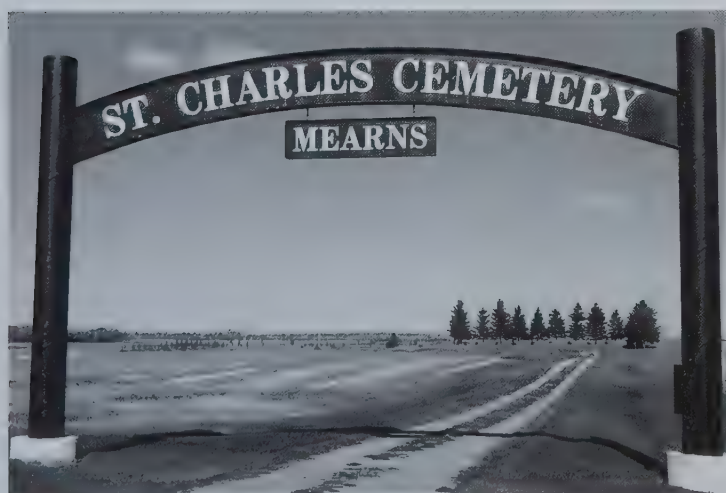
MEARNS CEMETERY

St. Charles Cemetery (Mearns)

Rules and Regulations

As passed at the General Meeting of July 15, 1987 to facilitate graveyard management.

1. The Cemetery committee shall be notified prior to commencement of any work so continuity is maintained. Contact Bob Massie, 939-2348 or Harold Borle, 939-2281.
2. The older part of the graveyard is hereby closed except for the family members who have someone buried in this section and if room is available.
3. Use of graveyard shall be limited to area residents past and present. Exceptions to this rule shall be considered on individual merit by the Parish Council.
4. Grave plots shall be four feet by eight feet (4'x8').
5. Concrete rough boxes must be used.
6. Above ground monuments shall be placed on an acceptable cement base installed flush with ground level.
7. Markers or plaques that are designed to rest flush with ground level are to be installed as per manufacturer's specifications.
8. Complete covers of granite or cement shall no longer be permitted in the new section of the graveyard. This type of cover will be discouraged in all sections except for matching existing monuments.
9. Planting of flowers is permitted, if maintained. Planting of bushes, shrubs or trees is not permitted.
10. Garbage such as grass clippings, soil, etc., from grave maintenance or landscaping shall be removed from the site by persons involved.
11. Vehicles are not permitted on site unless absolutely necessary.
12. Selection of burial plots shall only be made



Original site of St. Charles Roman Catholic Church, 1902 – 1930

from areas that have been opened for development by the Cemetery Committee. Adjacent plots may be reserved for spouse of deceased.

13. Requests for family plots may be honored by the committee when possible but no binding contracts shall be entered into.
14. There shall be no charge for burial plots or reservations requests.
15. The Cemetery Committee shall be responsible for maintaining accurate records and maps.

St. Stephen's Anglican Church

From *Decades of the Independence District (1981)*

Church services in Alcomdale for a group of dedicated Anglicans started in the Alcomdale High School in 1952. They needed a church building so a meeting was called in January of 1953. The members of the Vestry were: Mrs. R. Whitson, Mr. W. S. Meakin, Mr. J. Thomson and Mr. Milligan. Mr. Nick Byer was chosen as the Vicar's Warden. Mr. Tom McConaghy was chosen as the People's Warden.

During the following year this group was able to purchase a former Anglican church building from the Sunnibend area, northwest of Westlock. The building was moved to a piece of land donated by Mr. Thomas Lovelock, Block 14, Lots 1, 2 and 3. The Seal of Deed was affixed August of 1953.

A Women's Auxillary was started in 1952 with Mrs. J. Thomson as treasurer and Mrs. Warwick Meakin as president.

A room was added in 1954 for the Sunday school and it was also used as a hall.

The wedding of Joan Meakin and Bob Gillard was the first wedding in the church in June of 1954.

In 1956 the church building was destroyed by fire. The organ, two wooden collection plates and a crocheted cloth of the Last Supper were saved. It now hangs in the St. Phillips Church in Westlock in memory of Mrs. Mary Elliott. For some time Mr. and Mrs. N. Byer opened their home for services. In due time the decision was reached to replace the church building. This time a basement was dug and the former Riopel School was bought and moved to the spot. Services resumed in the new building and the basement was used for card parties, suppers and bazaars. Mrs. J. Thomson also held teas and bazaars in their home.

The priests over the years were: Reverend K. Minchin – 1952-54; Reverends A. Swinton, E. Curry, D. Sims, D. Browne – June to December, 1954; Reverend Russel Sayer – 1955-61; Reverend Eric Blackstock – 1962-63; Reverend Winchester – 1964-66; reverend Stan Noble – 1967-68. There

were times of necessity that A.D. O'Brien-Smith took a service. Organists were Mr. Horricks, Mrs. Kels, Reverend Minchin and Mr. Raymont.

The last record of service was April of 1968. The building was sold to John and Gay Lister, who did extensive renovations to both the interior and exterior to convert it into their home in Alcomdale.

Faith Based Groups

Independence Women's Institute

From *Decades of the Independence District* (1981)

The Independence Women's Institute was first organized in 1919 by Mrs. A.H. Rogers who was then District Director. The organizational meeting was held at the home of Mrs. Richard Pickering across the road from the Ellett Bros. farm. Mrs. Thomas Lovelock was chairwoman for the meeting and Mrs. Eddie Pickering (nee Jessie Browning) was secretary. Mrs. J. Dunham was elected president for the coming year with Mrs. E. Pickering as secretary-treasurer and Mrs. John Williams as vice president. The three directors nominated were Mrs. W. Mills, Mrs. G. Ashbaugh and Mrs. Dehnke. The auditors were Mrs. T. Lovelock and Mrs. A. Bailey (nee Agnes Pickering). The meetings were to be held on the second Wednesday afternoon of each month.

Right away plans were launched for several projects. A hall was being built in Busby so Independence staged a concert on August 15, 1920 with a .25 cent door admission, netting \$60.39, of which \$25 was donated to Busby's cause. Possibly this concert was held in the Bamill School.

More members' names were added to the roll through 1920. Miss Madge Hargrove (later Mrs. Arthur Ellett), schoolteacher at Bamill, Miss Hilda Lovelock, Mrs. A. Larson, Mrs. H. Goodman, Mrs. George Brown, Mrs. Collins Sr., Mrs. Henry Measures, Mrs. Porter Heath, Mrs. Waage, Mrs. J. Cox and Mrs. Frank Mitchell. Mrs. J. Williams and Mrs. Dehnke joined the Advance W.I., north and west of Busby.

"For Home and Country" was the motto of the Women's Institute and they never failed. Needy families were helped. Sewing bees were held to make complete outfits for a motherless family of five. An elderly lady, Mrs. Henry Measures, could not attend the meetings so the W.I. would go to her just to give her that social contact. She lived on the Bailey road. The Alex Benson farm has obliterated the farm site now but it is often referred to as the Measures Place or the Burgess place. Mrs. Measures was the first in the W.I. to be given a life membership.

Schools and children were major interests of the W.I. Prizes were given yearly to winners in several

projects: essays, elocution and attendance to name a few, not for one school but for four, which included Bamill, Independence, Alcomdale and Kingsley. These four schools got together for socials, competitions and mass inoculations and vaccinations when the need came.

An interesting note: A wing was set up in the yard of the Independence School grounds by the W.I. as they had won the best attendance this one year of the four schools.

A traveling library was established and set up in the home of Mrs. J. Dunham and many hungry readers were satisfied.

Mrs. James Mitchell became a member in 1921 and was still quite active until she moved to the Senior Citizen's Lodge in Westlock. Ever faithful to the W.I. she could put the rest of us to shame with her vitality and "taking time for all things".

There was a girls' club started in the early years in the Kingsley district. Mrs. Farrand was the leader and they were called the Sweet Briars. Very active and the girls enjoyed it immensely. In 1924 the W.I. gave a silver baby cup to Master Lloyd Keene.

All through these early years the need of a community hall was kept to the front. There was a hall built in Alcomdale. The W.I. was using the Bamill School, the Pickering hayloft, the Ellett Bros. house or the Independence Church. The thought of joining with either Busby or Alcomdale was not feasible in a community where there were many small children and only horses or walking as the means of getting around; so a hall was needed.

It was decided to build a log building and Mr. Farrand, who had plenty of trees on his farm near Deadman Lake, went to work to cut logs and to saw them. These logs were hauled to the building site, which was an acre of land donated by Mr. J. Dunham on the northeast corner of his quarter. By this time the men had decided that a frame building would be better. So the logs were hauled to the Spargo Bros. Mill and sawed into lumber. The Spargos donated their time. The building was built with all volunteer labor headed by Mr. Gordon.

Plays were staged to raise money for this project. "The Country Minister", a three-act play, was put on in the Bamill School in 1923. The Cast? Mr. and Mrs. Warren Fulton, Mr. and Mrs. James Mitchell, Mrs. G. Ashbaugh, Miss Hallie Taylor, Fred Shaver, Willis Collins and Frank Ellett. Gale Ashbaugh was director.

Concert material was plenty and contained varied talent. The Fulton's and Ashbaughs led the music, Mrs. Farrand sang and Mrs. Mills gave monologues.

Other members during the twenties were Hallie

Taylor (later Mrs. Alex Macdonald), a school teacher, Miss Dorothy Allyn, another school teacher (later Mrs. Dewey Spargo), Mrs. Melbourne Keene, Miss Eva KcKitrick, a school teacher, Mrs. Gordon, Mrs. Louch, Mrs. W. Reynolds and daughter, Ruth.

The three act plays became a yearly feature gaining in reputation and large crowds. This required weeks of preparation in sub-zero weather. The work involved was quickly forgotten but we still remember the educational value, the social part of it and the mental lift it gave us when we “pulled off” one of these “big plays” successfully.

On February 25, 1925 the minutes of the W.I. read: “A special meeting was held to plan the finishing of the hall at the home of Mrs. J. Cox”. The W.I. borrowed \$100 to do it with. So on April 17, 1925 the Independence Hall was opened with a big concert and dance. It is important to name the committees of the evening.

Entertainment: Mrs. W. Reynolds, Ruth Reynolds and Mrs. A. Macdonald.

Lunch: Mr. J. Cox, Mrs. W. Mills and Mrs. A. Bailey

Posters: Mrs. A. Bailey.

And was there ever a crowd! Benches were made by nailing boards to firewood. There were difficulties to overcome but the hall was open and usable and we felt like a million dollars. We had more than a building. It was the birth of community spirit, the need of community social life, the blending of community ideals, work and money. The Independence Institute has always believed in something educational, something uplifting and the majority of functions held in this hall were something for the head, spirit, the stomach and plenty for the heels.

A tribute to the men of the community who did so much whenever needed; all volunteer work, but they were there with their time and talent.

The Whitson family moved to the Bailey farm in 1926 and were ardent workers in the W.I.

The W.I. meetings were interesting. Topics were of education, citizenship, agriculture, Canadian industries, home economics, handicrafts and current events – all valuable information as there were no radios, telephones or television. Conventions and conferences usually had a delegate from Independence. These were our early years, our start. People came to the community, joined the W.I., gave of their time, talents and money and moved on. The country was growing older and there were more organizations. Cars were more common and moving around easier. Interests were wider. We weathered the “hungry thirties”, bruised but by no means beaten. The monthly meetings were the melting pot

of the community. Nobody actually suffered from lowered financial status; there were very few rich, we were all one.

Showers were held for young married couples. No young person ever left the district to get married without a gift from the W.I. Like all other institutes we gave gifts to hospital patients, flowers to the bereaved, layettes wherever needed. We kept all our dues paid and donated to all worthwhile projects of the Alberta and Federated Institutes, Red Cross and Cancer Fund.

In 1937 an extension was built on the north end of the hall. Cement blocks were made for foundation and the older part was straightened. Mr. Frank Wilcox was hired as carpenter.

Then came the war years. The minutes of the W.I. took on a very urgent feeling of the demands made upon it. Appeals for clothing, quilts, ditty bags, hussifs, money, yarn, socks, layettes and scrap books – no request was ever passed up by the Women’s Institute. Fur lined jackets were made for the Merchant Marines. Donations of old fur coats, muffs and stoles came pouring in to be made up and sent away as quickly as possible. Every W.I. across Canada worked unstintingly. It was gratifying to hear an official in Ottawa, on a news report say, “that for every day needs of the war stricken area of the world, no women’s organization could equal the Women’s Institute”. We answered the many appeals for overseas relief, Greece, Turkey, Korea, etc., through the Unitarian Service Committee.

Two new projects after the war were taken on by the W.I. – Social Service and United Nations. This meant more study and more giving.

The Independence W.I. celebrated their 50th anniversary in 1969.

There cannot be a history without names. We may not have records of some past members but grant that, as they were members, they surely did their part. To add to the list already mentioned and apologies if any are omitted only by error: Mrs. Warwick Meakin, Mrs. A.D. O’Brien-Smith, Mrs. A. Benson Sr., Mrs. Hastings, Mrs. Wm. Arlow, Mrs. Willis Collins, Mrs. Knowles, Mrs. F. Kyle, Mrs. A. Ducarme, Mrs. F. Hargrove, Mrs. J. Sutton, Mrs. Don Whitson, Mrs. Richard Whitson, Mrs. Britton Mills, Mrs. Buster Ferguson, Mrs. Elwood Benson, Mrs. Ward Fulton, Mrs. J. Sprackman, Mrs. E. Cameron, Mrs. Cameron Fulton, Mrs. Leonard Whitson, Mrs. Wm. Sime, Mrs. L. Greenway, Mrs. H. Rye, Mrs. Archie Cameron, Mrs. Alex Benson, Mrs. A. Friedrich, Mrs. Norman Bakker, Mrs. D. Trelenberg, Mrs. A. Nimmert, Mrs. J. Arlow, Mrs. James Kyle and several school teachers whose names have slipped memory.

The Independence Women's Institute continued to be very active throughout the years. The Independence Hall operated under their guidance for many years. Many plays, suppers, and fundraisers were put on by the Women's Institute. As membership dwindled to five members, the decision to disband the Women's Institute was made in the year 2000. Since then the local ladies still look after the Independence Hall. As it was for all the years before, the hall is still used for showers, birthday parties, family reunions, special occasions and meetings. The last "Annual Seniors Supper" (started in 1967) was held the last Friday of September 2007. It is planned to close the hall in 2008.

Knights of Columbus (Father McGrane Council)

By Don Case and Tony Stitsen

On March 29, 1882, in New Haven Connecticut, a young priest named Michael J. McGivney, gathered a group of Catholic men together and formed the first chapter of what we know today as the Knights of Columbus. Based on ideals of charity, unity, fraternity and patriotism, Father McGivney founded this organization.

His purpose in bringing these men together was to do the following: Help Catholic men remain steadfast in their faith, to promote close ties and fraternity among them, and to set up a means in which to protect the widows and children from destitution when the caregiver passed on. He introduced the idea of a simple insurance program for this purpose, to help out the fallen Knight's family. This lonely chapter of men blossomed into a worldwide organization of over 1.6 million members and 11,000 Chapters today.

Back on April 30, 1997 a group of 34 men from the communities of St. Charles (Mearns), St. Emerence (Riviere Qui Barre), and St. Catherine (Calahoo) parishes

got together and held their first meeting of the Father McGrane Council of the Knights of Columbus. These men chose this name in remembrance of Father McGrane who served years ago as pastor in these communities. They felt that Father McGrane showed dedication, selflessness, and held true to the virtues of what we as Knights hold true to.

Without the use of gaming money (Bingos and Casinos), Father McGrane Council has raised funds to support Newman College, St. Joseph's Seminary, Catholic Social Services, Pro-Life, Marion Center and youth camps (Our Lady of Victory, Camp Encounter), as well as sending our youth to attend World Youth Day in different parts of the world.



Knights of Columbus making pancakes after Mass at St. Emerence Church



Knights of Columbus Father McGrane Council in 2006 received Fourth Degree. Front row L to R; Edmond Bourque, Michael Mitchell, Travis Belanger, Louis Krywko, Richard Friedrich, Anthony Stitsen

The Council's monthly Pancake Breakfasts and the Annual Pig Roasts have become a standing tradition in the communities that they serve. The Council has also lent their time in working at the Family Life Conference at Lac St. Anne.

Richard Friedrich was sworn in as the first Grand Knight of this organization, and over the following years Tony Stitsen, Travis Belanger, and Don Case have succeeded Richard to lead this group of men in their service to their community. These men and their fellow Knights, whether out front or from behind the scenes, continue to give of their time and effort to the churches that they attend. They help with the needs of each parish (i.e. lay ministries, renovations) and also in time of need, such as sickness and family loss, help out the families in the area. This group of men has grown since its start to 56 members today in 2007 and will continue to grow over the next generation.

St. Charles Borromeo CWL, Mearns

By Phyllis Borle

When Father R.J. Merchant became the pastor of St. Charles, the Mearns Catholic Women's League (CWL) was formed under his leadership and direction. The following is taken from the original minutes of the first meeting.

"On Sunday, September 24, 1950, a meeting of the ladies of St. Charles Parish was held in the parish hall with Mrs. G. Dearing and Mrs. Pratley, Diocesan President of the CWL of Edmonton presiding. After an interesting and informative talk by Mrs. Dearing, it was decided that St. Charles ladies form a CWL. Sub division of the CWL –

moved by Mrs. Helena Kluthe, seconded by Mrs. Friedrich. Carried. Officers were elected as follows from the 15 ladies present.

President – Mrs. Joseph Kluthe (Helena)

1st Vice President – Mrs. Alvin Altmiks (Mary)

2nd Vice President – Mrs. Dan Sheehan (Catherine)

3rd Vice President – Mrs. August Kluthe (Josephine)

Secretary – Mrs. Hugh Kennedy (Agnes)

Treasurer – Mrs. T J Harrington (Marie)

Mrs. Dearing then introduced Mrs. Pratley who said a few words wishing us every success. Our director, Father Merchant thanked Mrs. Dearing and Mrs. Pratley for their kindness in paying us this visit and helping us at getting organized. It was decided to hold a meeting in about 3 weeks time at St Charles rectory. Meeting adjourned by Mrs. Harrington."

The local council was off to a good start. The membership fee was set at \$1 per member with \$3.60 per capita to be sent to the Diocesan Council each year. The registration of sub division of the Archdiocese of Edmonton was sent for at a cost of \$2. Charter number 1240 was received in November 1950 – this was framed and proudly on display at meetings and CWL functions. Meetings were scheduled for the second Thursday of each month in the rectory. Committees were formed for church and rectory cleaning, fund raising, visiting the sick, welcoming newcomers, social events and membership. The constitution and bylaws of the CWL were read a few pages at a time and discussed by the members. All meetings began with prayer and concluded with prayer and an act of consecration to Mary.

In subsequent meetings St. Charles CWL discussed parish and community needs with great enthusiasm and plans were made to hold a chicken supper and bazaar November 5, 1950 to raise some funds. That same fall they held a clothing drive for the Sisters of St. Mary's Home in Edmonton, hosted a Christmas party for St. Charles' parishioners and provided goody bags for the children on that occasion, planned and held a family picnic in June including chicken supper (adults .75 cents, children .35 cents) followed by a concert for the



Mearns CWL – 2007. Back Row, L to R: Laura Kieser, Jeanette Schnirer, Joyce Brenneis, Myra Dwyer, Charelene Biollo, Yvonne Kluthe, Marge Kluthe, Liz Falls. Front Row: Simone Kluthe, Joan Polakovits, Therese Ricard, Anastazia Lutz, Faith Case, Susie Kluthe, Claire Stitsen, Adele Mudge, Phyllis Borle

small fee of .40 cents.) The ladies sold baking and home made goods at the Edmonton market in the summer. Thus ended a busy and fruitful first year.

The CWL purchased dishes, silverware, tablecloths and tea towels to be used for their socials, chicken suppers and picnics. In those first years they bought fabric and sewed cassocks, surplices and altar linens for the church; purchased a vacuum cleaner, cleaning supplies and wax needed for the church and rectory. Raffles of such items as a load of coal, a quilt, a doll with wardrobe, a radio or record player helped to provide funds for the Sisters of St. Mary's Home, the Sisters of Service in Trochu and the Atonement Home in Edmonton; provide a donation to help refurbish the CWL lounge room at the Colonel Mewburn Veteran's Hospital; fund the Catholic Truth Broadcast Radio Programs; and furnish a room in the Star of The North Retreat House. Fund raising also enabled the St. Charles ladies to contribute to the CWL scholarship fund; to fill hampers for needy families at Christmas; and to purchase a gift for all new babies born in the parish. The CWL also hosted bridal showers and catered weddings.

The night of the CWL meeting was a special night 'out' for these ladies. It was a dress up occasion – an evening of prayer, renewal of spirituality, of planning and working together for the betterment of the church community and its concerns. A half-hour at each meeting was devoted to discussing the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine under the guidance of Father Merchant. He also instituted a question box answering all questions on liturgy, church law, prayer and the bible, following the



CWL members receiving service pins – Feb. 2, 1997. L to R: Grace Brenneis (40), Therese Ricard (40), Alice Nobert (40), Susie Kluthe (25), Joan Polakovits (25), Laura Kieser (CWL President)

spiritual at each meeting. The Rosary was pledged and prayed daily for peace in the world and monthly masses were offered for members' intentions. Cards were sent to all parishioners who were in hospital and those ill at home were visited.

These devout and hard-working women proudly wore their CWL membership buttons (ordered for



C.W.L. – 40th Anniversary, Oct. 28, 1990. Standing, L to R: Mary Altmiks, Mariette Cunningham, Therese Ricard, Delia Logan, Louise Chatvaire. Seated: Lorene Boddez, Regina Friedrich, Agnes Polakovits, Helena Kluthe (1st President). All are original 40-year members

\$1 each) and participated in conventions and meetings on the Diocesan level. In order to encourage good attendance at their meetings, a money prize was given at each meeting – every member present gave ten cents “Tea Money” and the names of all members, including that of the priest director, were placed in a hat and a name drawn for the ‘Tea Money’ prize. If the member was not present at the meeting, the money was added to the next meetings’ jackpot.

These busy ladies organized funeral lunches, sold coffee, sandwiches and pie at farm sales, hosted farewells and socials for the Sisters and Priests, and purchased gifts of appreciation to be given to all faithful members who moved from the parish of St. Charles. The members looked after the Western Catholic subscriptions and sponsored ball tournaments for the CYO (Catholic Youth Organization). In 1955 fabric was purchased and ball uniforms sewn by the ladies for the Mearns Girls Softball Team. St. Charles CWL encouraged the talents of local people, young and old by hosting amateur hours, talent shows and putting on plays following their annual fall suppers, which were much enjoyed by all who participated or came to see them.

In 1964 funds were raised to purchase a new organ for the church. That same year, the materials were bought for a recreation booth and toilets, which were built and placed by the ball diamonds, to be used for picnics and other outdoor activities. These facilities are still in use today.

In April of 1966 the Mearns Parish sponsored a three-act comedy play, ‘Aunt Tillie Goes to Town’ directed by Morris Logan and advertised in the local paper. The cast included Richard Friedrich, Lucien Bugnet, Maurice Bugnet, Ludick Banack, Yvonne Kluthe, Susie Kluthe, Joan Polakovits, Denise Lirondelle Irene Byer, Lorene Boddez and Emma

Schafers. All proceeds went to the Mearns Catholic Women’s League.

For many years nothing much was done inside the church and it was beginning to look a little shabby and needed a new coat of paint. Therefore, as a centennial project in 1967 a magnificent effort was put forth by the whole parish and between two Sundays the church interior was completely repainted, the ceiling re-tiled and the sanctuary re-carpeted, giving the people a great feeling of pride in their ‘new’ church. Since then a great many changes have taken place. The Sanctuary was totally remodeled and new altar furniture replaced the original altar and furnishings, (which were on loan to a chapel in the Morinville Convent Museum).



Ribbon cutting ceremony at the Grand Opening of the new Parish and Community Hall in the Mearns Church basement – October 23, 1995. L to R: Alberta Lotteries representative, Arlene Whitson, Fr. Zynel, Robert & Laura Kieser, Colleen Soetaert, Fr. Paul Terrio and Jerry Kaup.

New vestments were made, the tabernacle re-brassed and the Stations of the Cross restored and painted in preparation for the 50th anniversary of the church. The CWL contacted all former parishioners to come to an anniversary mass, which was held in August of 1980. The pouring rain couldn’t begin to

dampen the spirits of all present even though the planned family picnic was cancelled and all events moved to the neighboring community of Riviere Qui Barre school gym. After mass the CWL hosted a celebratory meal for over 300 people – the main ingredient being whole roasted pigs, which were cooked in huge outdoor pits.

In 1990 our Council celebrated 40 years and were fortunate to have nine of the original St. Charles CWL members able to attend a



C.W.L. – 50th Anniversary – photo taken in 2000. L to R: Mary Altmiks (50 yrs), Louise Brenneis (40 yrs), Laura Kieser (40 yrs), Therese Ricard (50 yrs), Yvonne Kluthe (40 yrs)

special mass and celebration luncheon. The work these ladies began in 1950 continues today. Our church became a Historical Site in 1992 and with the help of grants, funds from the CWL and Community League and months of volunteer labour the Church basement was completely redone and has become our Parish and Community Hall, boasting full kitchen facilities and washrooms. This replaced the old St. Charles School that was closed in June of 1969 and purchased by the community to be used as a recreation hall.

The teaching sisters of Notre Dame remained in the Convent at Mearns and taught at Riviere Qui Barre after the school closed. When the Sisters returned to their Mother House in Ontario in 1976, the teaching of catechism and preparation for the Sacraments became the responsibility of the Parish. To this day these needs are met by members of the CWL, teaching between 40 and 50 children ranging in age from 4 to 12 years. Prayer cards, books, craft supplies and other teaching items required for the different age groups are financed by the CWL.

The year 2000, being our Golden Jubilee Year, we planned a special celebratory mass on Sunday September 24, the anniversary date of our first meeting. This mass was offered for the continued success of the Catholic Women's League in Canada and as a thanksgiving to God for the many blessings received by the CWL during its 50 golden years in St. Charles Boromeo Parish.

Our Council presently has 34 members and holds regular monthly meetings on the second Wednesday of each month, except July and August. We participate in Zone 2 meetings and the Diocesan Convention annually and continue with the works begun so many years ago in our parish and community.

St Charles CWL Presidents and Spiritual Directors

1950-1952	Helena Kluthe	Fr. R.J. Merchant
1952-1954	Mary Altmiks	Fr. R.J. Merchant until Sept. 1953 Fr. Gregory Rijniers
1954-1956	Lorene Boddez	Fr. Gregory Rijniers
1956-1959	Josephine Kluthe	Fr. Gregory Rijniers
1959-1962	Laurette Bugnet	Fr. Gregory Rijniers
1962-1964	Pauline Banack	Fr. Gregory Rijniers until Oct. 1962 Fr. Volk
1964-1966	Joyce Biddiscomb	Fr. Volk until Oct. 1964 Fr. H. Peet
1966-1968	Evelyn Byer	Fr. H. Peet then Fr. J. Adamyk Oct. 66 – Fr. Ted Rozmahel
1968-1970	Louise Brenneis	Frs. Rozmehel, McDougal, and Fr. Mike McCaffery
1970-1971	Dorothy Kluthe	Fr. Mike McCaffery, Fr. O'Callahan for two months
1971-1973	Laura Kieser	Aug. 29, Fr. J.E. McGrane (1970)
1973-1974	Emma Schafers	Fr. J. Cunningham
1975-1976	Marion Friedrich	Fr. H. Roche

1976-1977	Delina Remillard until fall of '76 then Louise Brenneis	Fr. H. Roche
1978-1979	Louise Brenneis	Fr. B. Glendenning
1979-1981	Therese Ricard	Fr. B. Glendenning
1981-1983	Yvonne Kluthe	Fr. B. Glendenning Fr. Lavery
1983-1985	Yvonne Byer	Fr. F. Lavery & Fr. Joly
1985-1987	Joyce Brenneis	Fr. F. Lavery
1987-1989	Vivian Elder	Fr. F. Lavery Fr. Karol Zynel (Sept. '87)
1989-1991	Joyce Brenneis	Fr. Karol Zynel
1991-1992	Debbie Mitchell	Fr. Karol Zynel
1993-1996	Phyllis Borlé	Fr. Karol Zynel Fr. A. McKenzie
1996-1999	Laura Kieser	Fr. Paul Terrio
1999-2007	Marjorie Kluthe	Fr. Paul Terrio, Fr. J. Sobkowicz Fr. O. Monroy, Fr. W. Santana



"More of the Cooks" – Marion Friedrich with help from Oliver Brenneis and Jim Falls



"Pies, Pies, Pies!" – Vivian Brenneis, one of the "Pie Ladies" St. Charles CWL

St. Charles Borromeo Prayer Group

By Laura Kieser

Our youth group, with the Sisters and Fr. Rozmahel, started about 1969. We would gather together in small groups and pray for those who needed help and healing. I was invited to one of these healing sessions with Josephine Kluthe and Louise Brenneis at the home of Claire and Tony Stitsen. We felt such peace and joy as we joined in praising God in song, reading scripture, sharing and praying for people who needed prayer and healing, followed by lunch. We knew and felt in our hearts as we left there that this was what we all needed, groups gathering together in prayer.

A few years later, about 1980, we were invited to go to a prayer meeting at Joe and Yvonne Leduc's home in Morinville. We felt the presence of the Lord as the meeting opened with singing praise, sharing scripture and praying the rosary for all those needing prayer and healing. Standing on God's word for us in Matthew 18:19-20 the power of united prayer... "If



Laura Kieser started the St. Charles prayer group. She donated the statue for the shrine in front of the church

two of you join your voices on earth to pray for anything whatever, it shall be given to you by my Father in heaven and where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there in their midst."

The group became too large for the Leduc home and moved to a more suitable location. When I came back from these meetings, I felt such peace and uplifting and had new strength to cope with life, knowing that God is there to fill all our needs (Philippians 4:19).

These meetings encouraged me to read the Bible more, as God speaks to us in his word, and to hear his message for my life, it also deepened my faith and love for God and the working of his Holy Spirit to guide us.

One day, after one of these meetings, I was asked if I would start a prayer group in our parish of Mearns; we prayed about that and I said I would bring it up at our CWL meeting to be agreed upon. This was done, and all agreed that all parishes should have this people gathering together, praying for our families, friends, the sick and all who need prayer and the hand of God for healing.

We started our first Prayer Meeting, Monday, September 13, 1999, getting together once a week. Believing in God's Word for us in Matthew 18:19-20... opening up with thanksgiving, singing praises and worship, reading scripture, sharing his word and praying the rosary... praying for our families, friends and all who need prayer, healing and conversion.

We believe that the power of prayer moves the hand of God and he will hear and answer all our prayers according to his will if we ask in the name of his Son, Jesus, putting all our trust and faith in him who loves us.

The prayer group continued to meet weekly until the spring of 2006. Since then the group meets occasionally when a few parishioners get together at the church.

Creed to Live By

Today is a new day, hence:

I refuse to be shackled by yesterday's failures,

What I don't know I will no longer allow to intimidate me,

I will instead view it as an opportunity.

*I will not allow others to define my mood, my method,
my image or my mission.*

*I will pursue a mission greater than myself
by making at least one person happy that he or she saw me.*

*I will not tolerate self-pity, gossip or negativism
from myself or from others.*

REFLECTION ON LIVING

*I asked God to take away my bad habits.
God said no, they are not for Me to take away, but for you to give up.
I asked God to make my handicapped child whole.
God said, no. His spirit is whole, his body only temporary.
I asked God to grant me patience.
God said no. Patience is a byproduct of tribulations, not granted, but learned.
I asked God to give me happiness.
God said no. I give you blessings. Happiness is up to you.
I asked God to spare me from pain.
God said no. Suffering draws you apart from worldly cares and brings you closer to Me.
I asked God, make my spirit grow.
God said no. You must grow on your own, but I will prune you to make you fruitful.
I asked God for all things that I might enjoy life.
God said no. I will give you life so that you may enjoy all things.
I asked God to help me love others, as He loves me.
Ahhh, God said. Finally, you're getting the idea.*

A BLESSING

*May the blessing of light be upon you
Light on the outside, Light on the inside
With God's sunlight shining on you.*

*May your heart glow with warmth
Like a turf fire
That welcomes friends and strangers alike.*

*May the light of the Lord shine from your eyes
Like a candle in the window
Welcoming the weary traveler*

*May the blessing of God's soft rain be on you
Falling gently on your head, refreshing your soul
With the sweetness of little flowers newly blooming.*

*May the strength of the winds of heaven bless you
Carrying the rain to wash your spirit clean
Sparkling after in the sunlight.*

*May the blessing of God's earth be on you
And as you walk the roads
May you always have a kind word for those you meet.*

Remember the five simple rules to be happy:

- 1. Free your heart from hatred*
- 2. Free your mind from worries*
- 3. Live simply*
- 4. Give more*
- 5. Expect less*

Family Tales

Adler, Neil & Donna

By Neal Adler

I, Leslie Neal Gordon Adler, was born in Paradise Hill hospital in 1941. I received my education in Paradise Hill Saskatchewan School. I started work with a seismic crew and worked numerous jobs in the oil industry.

Donna was born in Rabbit Lake area. Her father and mother moved to Lloydminster where her father was employed in the oil industry. Donna took her schooling in Lloydminster and Kitscoty, Alberta. We met in Lloydminster.

In 1990 we purchased our farm from Kieflers. The farm is situated a quarter mile west of Alcomdale (SE 06-57-26-W4). We immediately started to change it to a horse ranch, building a half-mile training track, stables, paddocks and fences.

Through the years we purchased "standardbred" horses in Kentucky, claimed and raced. I continue to work in the oil industry while Donna commutes to Westlock, Edmonton and St. Albert, working in various jobs with the elderly in lodges as well as caring for the horses when I am gone for weeks at a time.

I am living my lifelong dream and Donna is living her worst nightmare as we breed, train and

race the best breed of horses, "standardbred". We would gladly be interested in showing our horses to our friends and anyone interested in the harness racing business.

Altmiks Brothers, Alvin, Fred & Henry

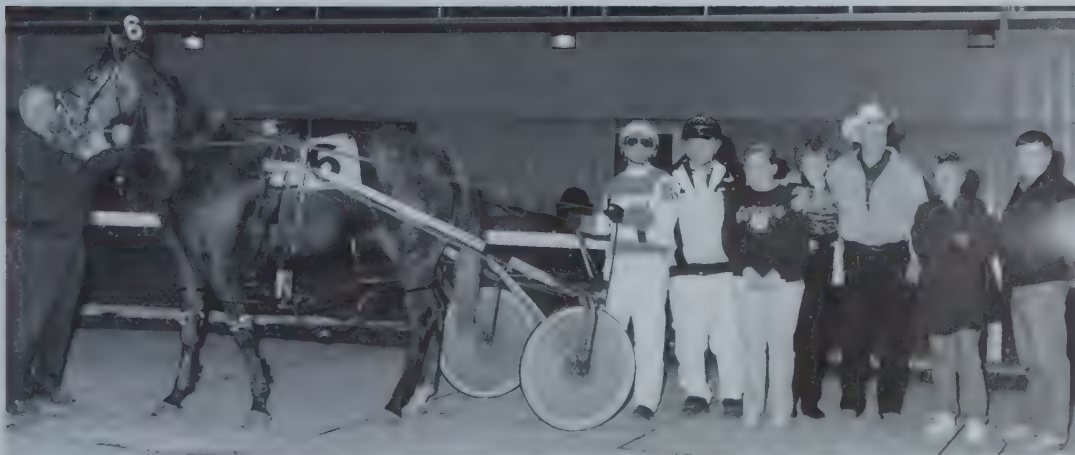
By Mrs. Mary (Alvin) Altmiks

Alvin Altmiks and his brothers, Fred and Henry, came to Canada from Buren, Germany (Westfalia) in 1924. Fred was born in 1901, Alvin in 1903 and Henry in 1905. The three of them were going to come to Canada together but at the last minute Henry was stopped because he only had his thumb and forefinger on his right hand. His other three fingers and part of his hand were cut off by a bread-making auger when he worked in a bakery in Germany. He had to prove to the officials that he would be able to farm because, at that time, they were only allowing farmers to stay in Canada. He was allowed to come a month later.

The first year the brothers worked on farms for relatives. It was a cold winter with a lot of snow. Alvin worked on a farm with horses and cattle. The snow had come too early and the feed for the animals was still out in the fields in stooks. Every day he had to go out into the field with a team of

horses and a rack and dig the stooks out of the deep snow to feed the animals. It was hard work on only two meals a day, breakfast and supper. The family thought in the winter the days were short and they didn't need three meals a day. That was all right for those who stayed in the house all day. The farmer didn't help Alvin with anything and for him the days were not short.

In the summer it was okay



Neal Adler's winning horse – Bill Tainsh Jr., Driver; Neal Adler, trainer



Gary and Bernadette (Altmiks) Palmarek family

but the next winter he went to work in a lumber camp. It was also hard work but they got three real good meals a day. The next year the brothers bought land northwest of Morinville. I don't know about the other two but Alvin was offered money to buy his quarter at 8% interest. He had saved his money from work to buy some hogs and cattle and started raising some to pay the interest which was difficult because the prices were so poor and his quarter of land was solid bush except for a spot where he built his one-room shack and barn, chicken coop and hog barn.

The other brothers' land was all bush as well, so in the summer they worked on different farms and in the winter they worked together clearing bush by hand with axes from early morning to dark, alternating a different farm every year, pulling stumps, dynamiting the larger ones and piling and burning until they each had enough land cleared to go on their own. The quarter that Fred and Henry took had houses and buildings on them. Alvin decided to take the quarter without the buildings. Their land was close together, all in one section.

Henry was the first to get married. They got married in October 1930. Fred married a few years later and Alvin married on April 23, 1935. Henry and Fred married

sisters, Sarah and May Lamoureux and Alvin married me, Mary Thomas. I was from Saskatchewan.

Alvin and I lived in his comfortable one room shack from April 1935 until December 1936 when we moved into the new four room house with a full basement. We had five children: John, born on December 19, 1936, Louise, born on August 19, 1939, Lillian, born on July 13, 1944, Robert, born on June 6, 1948 and Bernadette, born on September 11, 1955.

We lived on the farm for thirty-eight years after we were married then moved to Edmonton in 1973. Alvin passed away in 1981. I stayed in Edmonton until 1995 when I moved to Stony Plain where I now live in Diamond Jubilee, a senior's residence.

Altmiks, Fred & May

By Dorothy Geislinger (Altmiks)

Our dad, Fred Altmiks, was born March 19, 1901 in Buren Germany. His parents were Alois Altmiks and Louise Kluthe. They had six children: Gertrude, William, Joseph, Fred, Alvin and Henry. Three of the Altmiks brothers, Fred, Alvin and Henry, came to Canada in 1924 and farmed in the Mearns area.

On June 22, 1931, Fred married May Lamoureux at St. Charles Church in Mearns. Our mom was born May 9, 1906 west of Morinville where her parents were farmers. Her parents, Hermas Lamoureux and Rose Anne Doolan had five children: Molly, Herman, May, Sarah and Annie.



Mom and Dad Altmik's 50th Anniversary – June 22, 1981

Fred and May raised two daughters, Alice born October 18, 1935 and Dorothy born May 2, 1941. In 1957 Fred and May sold their farm near Mearns and purchased the Pete Girard farm south of Fort Saskatchewan. They lived there until 1970 and then purchased a home in Fort Saskatchewan. Dad passed away September 3, 1982 and Mom passed away November 8, 1991.

Alice

I was born and raised at Mearns and went to school there. In 1954 I married August Vion at St. Charles Church in Mearns, then moved to Fort Saskatchewan. We farmed until the passing of August in September of 1999.

We had three children, Donna, Keith and Wayne. Donna is married to Neil Johnston and lives in Slidell, Louisiana, a suburb of New Orleans. They have one son, Gregory. Keith is married to Debbi Merritt. They have two boys, Justin and Elliott. Wayne passed away in June 1971. Now one lives to enjoy family and friends who are very precious.

Dorothy

In 1961 I married Ray Geislinger at Our Lady of Angels Church in Fort Saskatchewan. Ray worked at Sherritt Gordon mines as an accountant until his retirement.

We have three daughters, Bonnie, Shelley and Tracy. Bonnie is married to Dean Peabody and lives on an acreage near Elk Island Park. They have two children, Angela and Daniel. Shelley lives in Vancouver working in the field of psychology after completing her master's degree. Tracy lives in the country near Vegreville with her husband Terry Deal. They have three children, Mark and twin girls Allison and Julianne. The years have gone by quickly and we look forward to many more.

Anderson, Harold & Kay Family

By Jannette Anderson

Harold Anderson was born in 1918 in a small farmhouse near the town of Ryley, Alberta. He passed away on April 26, 1982 at the Misericordia Hospital in Edmonton, Alberta.

Katherine (Kay) Anderson was born in 1918 in a log cabin near the town of Fairview, Alberta. Mom passed away on Sept. 23, 2001 at Norwood Capital Care in Edmonton, Alberta.

Kenny (Ken) was born in 1942 in St. Thomas, Ontario. He was killed in a trucking accident near Elk Point, Alberta on Nov. 29, 1976 while employed with Westcan Trucking, hauling crude oil.

Jimmy (Jim) was born in 1947 in Edmonton, Alberta. Jim retired as a Captain from the Edmonton Fire Department in spring of 2003.

Jannette was born in 1952 in Edmonton, Alberta and has been employed with the Federal Government since 1984.

My parents, Harold and Kay Anderson, moved to Alcomdale on a farm about two to three miles west of the town in 1955. Mom and Dad purchased the farm from Mr. & Mrs. (Cecil) Buster and Evelyn Ferguson, and at that time they moved into the town of Alcomdale with their son Robert. We moved from a farm near Ryley, Alberta. My oldest brother Kenny (Ken) was thirteen years old, Jimmy (Jim) was eight and I (Jannette) was three years old. We lived here until the summer of 1961 and moved into the city of Edmonton for a short period of time.

I recall an incident in the spring of 1959 when I was in grade one at the Alcomdale School when my oldest brother Ken (about 16 years old) got extremely hurt. Apparently he was running in the hallway and someone was chasing him. If I recall correctly, it had something to do with a rat-tail comb. I would imagine that they were goofing around as usual. When the chase was on, either Ken forgot to push open the glass doors or his hands slipped and he went through the glass panes cutting his neck open very close to his jugular vein. With me being a little girl at that time, I was very frightened. I remember Miss Virginia Zaharichuk & Mr. Art Perrott were there assisting him. Ken was bleeding very badly and someone had his or her hand over the gash. Someone from the school phoned our parents and informed them of the accident. Mr. Perrott put Ken in his car and stopped at the farm to pick up Dad and they drove to the closest hospital. I remember how my father told us that Mr. Perrott drove like a mad man on the slippery roads, as this incident was in the springtime. I remember when Ken was able to return home from the hospital he had white cloths wrapped around his neck and he was very pale from the loss of all the blood. At that time he ended up with many stitches. Did it teach him a lesson at that time? I doubt it.

My father, Harold, and my brothers Ken (approx age 14) and Jim (approx age nine) had a small musical band and they would play at many dances and functions in the community hall at Alcomdale. Dad played accordion, Ken on guitar and Jim on the banjo. Friends would give Dad a beer to sip on while playing and of course Ken, I believe, might have sneaked a sip or two and I wouldn't doubt that Jim did the same. Everyone in the community and outlying areas would attend good old country time music. People would make requests to Dad as to what tune they would like to hear next. There would be a luncheon served by the women in the later part

of the evening with various kinds of sandwiches, homemade baking, urns of coffee and juice for the kids. We would sit on wooden benches, which would be placed up against the walls and either visit or dance. Of course in those times the kids would always attend the functions and had a great time. Parents would be dancing with their children and the women would be dancing with each other if the men were outside having a drink of alcohol. There was no such thing called babysitters. You would see some kids covered up with jackets to stay warm sleeping on the benches. Very seldom in those days was there a fistfight, but on occasion it did happen. The small community was one big happy family where most people got along and always gave a smile in passing. How I wish I could relive those times once again.

Christmas concerts were always held in the Alcomdale School and we all looked forward to this special event. The teachers spent countless hours with us kids teaching us songs, dances and performing plays. We would make our costumes out of whatever was available or clothing from home. With me being so very small, I remember I had to wear a skirt that was too big for me and either it was pinned with a safety pin or the button broke, but while on stage during the play my skirt slipped off my little body. Here I was standing with only my leotards covering the lower part of me. I was totally embarrassed and everyone laughed. Towards the end of the evening someone dressed up as Santa Claus and appeared on the stage. That was the highlight of the evening for us kids. All of the children were so very excited to see him and we got to sit on his lap and receive a small brown paper bag filled with candy. All had a good time.

Dad decided to get my brothers, Ken and Jim, involved in Air Cadets. The nearest town for cadets was Bon Accord. Dad became an officer with the Air Cadet Corp and Ken and Jim were young cadets. They would meet once a week for training and learn various things. Mom would be left at times with milking the cows by hand, slopping (feeding) the pigs and all the other farm chores on the night of cadets. Other boys in the community of Alcomdale wanted to join cadets as well. If for some unknown reason their parents could not take their son(s), Dad would always find time to pick them up and take them to the meetings. If all of the boys involved in cadets worked hard enough, and followed the rules and regulations they were taught, they were rewarded by the Corp with a trip away from home for one-two weeks in the summer holidays. They still continued to train wherever the destination may have been. It could have been Banff, Calgary or

other locations. This gave the boys something to look forward to on a weekly basis and hopefully learn and take directions from their peers. What a great opportunity that was for them in the mid 50's. I remember that I was upset that I could not join cadets as Dad stated it was, "only for boys". Sure glad times have changed for the better.

We used to be invited to Mr. & Mrs. Alex and Ella Benson's farm to have a huge bonfire in their pasture in the evening. I would have been about six years old, Ken about 16 and Jim about 11. There were stacks upon stacks of wood and branches and the heat was intense coming off the fire. There was no reason to be cold unless you were running around in the bushes. We would play hide and seek and of course get the living hell scared out of us. We would run and scream our faces off. We would roast wieners and marshmallows and get our hands gooey. That was the best excuse to be able to lick your fingers. Of course both sets of parents decided to stay indoors and socialize. I remember going into Mr. and Mrs. Benson's old farmhouse where it was nice and warm and toasty to have a cup of hot cocoa and homemade spice cake. That tasted so good when you were a kid. My mouth is watering right now while I am thinking about it. Sure wish I had that recipe.

In the evenings, mainly in the winter months when farm life was not as busy as the summer months, we would be invited to Mr. and Mrs. Jim and Selma Tomten's for an outing. Most times Dad would bring his accordion and, if the boys decided to tag along, Ken would bring his guitar and Jim his banjo. There would be sing songs galore and Elaine would play a tune or two on her piano. Their house was always full of warmth and much laughter. Later in the evening, Selma would make a terrific lunch for all of us to chow down on. Many times our parents would sit in the kitchen around the huge table playing cards, having a beer or two and of course us kids would be chatting away. Where did those days go?

The curling rink in the town of Alcomdale was a busy place in the winter months. Mom and Dad managed to curl for a few winters, which they so very much looked forward to, visiting their friends and just having a great time. I was a little girl about six or seven years old and I would get bored watching the adults throw the rocks down the ice and try and score points for their team. I didn't understand the concept of this sport so I was fortunate enough to help out in the little snack bar with Mrs. Evelyn Ferguson, who I loved so very much. She even let me handle the money and give out the change from a dollar. That was a big thing

back then. This kept me occupied serving customers, wiping up the counters and whatever little tasks I could handle at that time. Soon the curling game was over and the snack bar was very busy with people talking, bragging and laughing. If the good old curling rink could talk back then, I am sure there would be some good stories to listen to.

When Mom and Dad had business appointments in the city during the day while my brothers were in school and I was not school age yet, they would sometimes decide that I would stay with Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton in the town of Alcomdale. I always enjoyed going there, as it was some place different for me to visit. Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton had a goat in their small back yard and that was the first time I tasted goat's milk. I thought it was great. I always looked forward to going to their home. Would I drink goat's milk now at my age? Not on your life!

Since I have managed to tell you a story about Ken and a few about myself, I have been in deep thought for a story on Jim. Now you must remember I was very young but I do recall this incident. Jim decided to run away from home, which I believe was in the late fall. He would have been about 10 years old. I cannot recall if he left a "run away note". He made sandwiches to go and managed to pack a few personal belongings. The weather was quite chilly and evening was approaching and it was getting quite dark. Mom or Dad phoned neighbors and asked if they had seen Jim, but he was nowhere to be found. There was a small search party of friends involved, calling out his name within the immediate area. We searched all the buildings in the farmyard, corrals and any place that he may have decided to go. The search continued farther and farther from the farm and the longer it went on the colder and darker it was getting outside. Of course Mom and Dad were very worried and were wondering where the heck Jim had disappeared to. I had to go along on the search, being a little girl, holding hands I believe with Mom, as there was no one at the house to take care of me. We were walking in the dark, stumbling over obstacles and God knows what else. There were a few flashlights being used by friends, but dark is dark when you are a small person.

All of a sudden someone hollered they had found Jim in a granary on Mr. Lovelock's property located down the road and across from our farm. Here he was curled up in the grain, sleepy and very cold and, I would imagine, hungry. His disappearance lasted approximately five to six hours. He must have been scared that he was going to get into trouble, which I am sure he was when we arrived back home. That was the first and last time he ran away from home.

Arlow, Tom & Frances

By Jerry & Shirley Arlow

Tom Arlow was born in 1902 in Northern Ireland. In 1924 he immigrated to Toronto, Ontario. While in Ontario, he worked in the gold mines for two years then moved to Alcomdale, Alberta, where his brother Will owned land, namely N½ of 2-57-27-W4. For about ten years, Tom and Will farmed during the summers and spent the winters with their horses and sleighs hauling fish from the northern lakes to railway sidings.

Frances Benson, born in Edmonton in 1907, went to the Alcomdale area in 1929. By being close neighbors, she and Tom got well acquainted. Tom was living with Will, while courting Frances. In 1932 they got married in Edmonton. Tom and Frances stayed in Uncle Will and Aunt Nora's house. Uncle Will moved a half mile north on the Chester place.

On April 14, 1933, a bouncing baby boy was born to the happy couple. Jerry went to Independence School, one mile west, on horseback until grade eight. The family lived on the Alcomdale farm for 15 years then moved to Vimy on the Rivet farm. Tom farmed until he passed away in May 1973.

Jerry continued farming. In February 1972, he met Shirley from Ottawa and they were married in 1973. Shirley, a city girl, took right to farming as if she had lived on the farm all her life.

Frances lived in the city for two years then moved back to the farm, living in a mobile home until her passing in 1978.

Arlow, William & Norah

By William Arlow – reprinted with permission from "Decades of the Independence District" history book (1981)

William Arlow migrated to Alberta in 1921 from Belfast, Northern Ireland. He immediately became a part of Alberta's progress, having his first job with a railroad contractor who was building a railroad at Granger, east of Calgary. Later he got a job on a ballast train on the Empress Line, east of Bassano.

In the fall of 1921, Will had a job logging in the Crowsnest mountain area by Coleman. In the spring of 1922, he worked for H.G. McDonald, contractor, who had the contract for the Lethbridge irrigation ditches. In the spring of 1923, Will came to Edmonton with H.G. McDonald and worked on building the Isolation Hospital in the city. During 1924, McDonald had a camp between Leduc and

Millet, which William ran for him, and another one later between Clyde and Athabasca, which he was in charge of.

In 1927, Will married Norah Sparr, a young widow with two children, Cleon and Christian.

Sometime before this, Will's brother Tom arrived from Toronto. Will bought a half section of land three miles west of Alcomdale and a mile north running east to the Bailey road. This was bought from Dr. Conroy and was once the Alex Kelly farm, NW¼- 2-57-W4 and NE¼- 2-57-27-W4.

Will's first view of Alcomdale was in the spring of 1928 when he and his helper Slim Van Horne, arrived at the station by train with goods and livestock, headed for the farm. They stopped to eat at Moore's Hotel.

The first crop sown in the spring was hailed out on July 23; there was nothing to do but plough under the remains.

Tom lived with Will Arlow until he married Frances Benson. He and Frances lived on the home quarter and Will took the east quarter. Will had been renting the half section north of him, belonging to Chester and Daugherty. The Will Arlow family lived there for a few years. Will bought more land, a half section from Mrs. Magirl and her son Louis, and in the early part of 1935 the Arlows moved to their new home, one half mile south of Independence Hall, W½-35-56-27-W4. Two happy events happened in the Arlow family during their life on the north farm: John Alexander was born and later identical twin girls were born, Norah and Mary.

Cleon and Chris had attended Independence School, having Miss Nina Bell as their teacher. The other children went to Bamill School and Alcomdale.

Will spent a number of winters freighting in northern Alberta. He and Tom had their own horses and some of the neighbor boys went with them each year.

The Arlows took part in the community life of Independence. Norah Arlow was a member of the Women's Institute for a number of years. Cleon and Chris attended Independence Church and Sunday school, belonged to the young people's group and played ball, as did the other children later.

Cleon married Jean Granger and farmed near Ft. St. John, British Columbia before moving to New Zealand. They had three children: Carol, Diana and Dale.

Christine married Myron Davidson and remained in the district. They had two daughters, Gloria and Loretta.

John (Sandy) married Karoline Poggemoeller from British Columbia. They bought the former Melbourne Keene farm. They had four children:

Allen, Anne, who was killed in a car accident in 1973, William and Arlene.

Norah married John Libke of Alcomdale and had four children: Gregory, Rodney, Susan and Jamie. Mary married Bob Bahler and they had three children: Kevin, Kelly and Warren.

Mrs. William Arlow passed away in the spring of 1969. Will sold his farm in 1973 to his son Sandy and grandson Allan, and moved into Edmonton.

Tom Arlow married Frances Benson in 1933. Tom bought more land and rented some. Son Jerry was born in 1934. He attended Independence School and Miss Laura Taylor was his first teacher followed by Mrs. O'Brien-Smith. The Tom Arlows sold out and moved to a farm in the Vimy district about 1950. Tom passed away in 1972 and Frances passed away in 1977.

Bailey, Arthur & Agnes

By Delmar Bailey and Ella Benson (Bailey)

Delmar Bailey and Ella Benson of Busby, Mildred Whitson of Red Deer and Doris Gill of Westlock are the children of the late Arthur and Agnes (nee Pickering) Bailey of Alcomdale.

Arthur and Agnes were married in 1918. They had five children: Delmar, Ella, Mildred, Doris and Gordon. Their baby Gordon died in 1930.

They lived on the east quarter of the Bailey farm, NE¼ 26-56-27-W4. After the Robert Jeffers family moved to British Columbia, Arthur and Agnes moved to that farm. They farmed three quarters. Their neighbors were the Farrand's across the road and south, and Stegman's on the quarter to the north. Arthur always had good horses and farmed that way for many years. He always had nice horses for riding.

All of the children attended Independence School except Doris (nicknamed Dodie) who went to Busby and Alcomdale Schools. The teachers the children had at Independence were Nina Bell, Adele Irving and Miss Howard.

The George Bailey Sr. family came to Edmonton in 1912 from Sedley, Saskatchewan. Our father, Arthur, had a restaurant in the Delton area of Edmonton, on the north side at 80th street. Some of his sisters helped to cook. Arthur moved to Independence from Edmonton in 1915. The Baileys were always active in the church, Sunday school, Women's Institute and other community affairs. They could all sing and were a wonderful help wherever needed.

Our earliest recollections of Busby were a school, two churches, two stores, two blacksmiths, two butcher shops, a barbershop and a poolroom,

post office (mail route), trucking service, passenger train service (nice train station), a garage and two elevators. Later Kitty (Nichol) McMillan had a lunch counter and a family had a confectionary and poolroom. We would go for mail in Alcomdale, so cream was taken to the train there, and grain was taken to either hamlet. Independence was our church.

Delmar stayed and farmed on the home place (now owned by Allan Andersen) till 1967, then purchased his brother-in-law's farm at Arvilla (George Lorenz's). Delmar's wife Josephine (Tot Lorenz) was a housewife until she passed away in August of 1984.

Delmar had two sons, George and Joe, and four daughters, Rose, Shirley, Karen and Lynn.

Ella had two sons, Leigh and Blake, and three daughters, Dixie, Margaret and Ivy.

Mildred had two sons, Dennis and Ronald, and three daughters, Faye, Lori and Kim.

Doris had five sons, Lyle, Don, Ralph, Doug and Marvin, and one daughter, Bonnie.

Banack, Ludick & Pauline

By Ludick Banack

I, Ludick Banack, was born July 15th in the Camrose hospital. I was raised on a farm eight miles from Camrose and attended school at Dinans. We drove the three and a half miles to school with



Ludick and Pauline Banack – 50th Wedding Anniversary, 1999

horses and sleigh in the winter and walked in the spring and fall.

During my young days, I stayed around home and worked for the farmers in the district. I worked with my dad for two and a half years during the war. In 1947, I went to work for the Canadian Pacific Railroad. I worked for them for two and a half years.

On September 28, 1949, I married Pauline Fischer. Pauline was born in Scott, Saskatchewan, on July 13, 1931. She lived most of her life on a farm by Primate, Saskatchewan.

In 1950, I started as a helper for the United Grain Growers in Camrose. In July 1951, I got my own elevator to operate in Perryvale and worked there for six years. Then we moved to Mearns where I operated the elevator for 15 years. In 1972 we moved to Holden and in 1979 we moved to Nisku where I retired July 31st, 1986. I bought grain for 36 years.

We have five children: Rosemarie, Tommy, Wayne, Jacqueline (Jackie) and Darin. I coached baseball in Perryvale, softball in Mearns and baseball in Holden.



The Ludick Banack Family – 1999

Tom, Susan, Pauline and I took a fly-in fishing trip to Andrew Lake. We flew to Fort Smith and from there we were flown to the lake. That place was isolated. No radio, no telephone, no TV. We got one paper if the plane went to Fort Smith. We had a very good holiday for one week. We would go out every day and try to catch a trophy lake trout. Our best was about seven pounds. We had a couple of cookouts.

In 1999, we celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary with a party at the Legion. We had a big surprise when the five Sheehan girls with Mike and Therese Ricard dropped in. We are going on 56 years married and still enjoying ourselves.

Banack, Thomas & Susan

By Thomas Banack



Susan & Thomas with "Frisky" & Taylor Mackenzie Banack

I was born Thomas Adolph, the eldest son of Ludick Banack on May 14, 1954 in Athabasca, Alberta. I was three years old when we moved to Mearns. I attended Mearns School from grades one through to six and then attended Riviere Qui Barre for grades seven and nine. Grade eight was taken in Morinville, grade ten and eleven were taken in St. Albert and grade 12 was taken in Holden.

I started my apprenticeship as a plumber in Camrose. I then got laid off and moved to Vegreville where I went to work for Tower Plumbing and Heating Ltd. It was during this time that I attended Patricia Campus in Edmonton where I received my plumbing and gas-fitting certificate.

During this time I met my wife, Susan F. Hughston, who was employed by Alberta Treasury Branches and we were married on June 11, 1983. I started working at Alberta Environmental Centre in Vegreville the Monday after our wedding day. The following year I was employed by Vegreville Long

Term Care Center and continue to be employed by them. April 1, 2006, I will be employed with Vegreville Long Term Care Center now known as Vegreville Care Centre – East Central Health Environmental Services for 21 years. After 22 years with ATB, Susan has now been employed by Prairie Management as an administrative assistant and bookkeeper for the past five years.

On October 5, 1995, after 12 years of marriage, we were blessed with our daughter, Taylor Mackenzie Banack. Taylor enjoys skating and has been in a skating program for the past seven years. She also loves dancing. She is starting her fourth year of ballet and last year tried musical theatre and loved it as well. She enjoys swimming, biking, camping and playing with her best pal, our dog Frisky, who is two years old.

I continue to hunt on an annual basis and enjoy camping with my family. Quading has become a favorite pastime for Taylor and myself. Susan enjoys scrapbooking, sewing costumes for skating and dance as well as serving on executive committees.

Bayley, Gary & Sue

By Sue Bayley (Lutz)

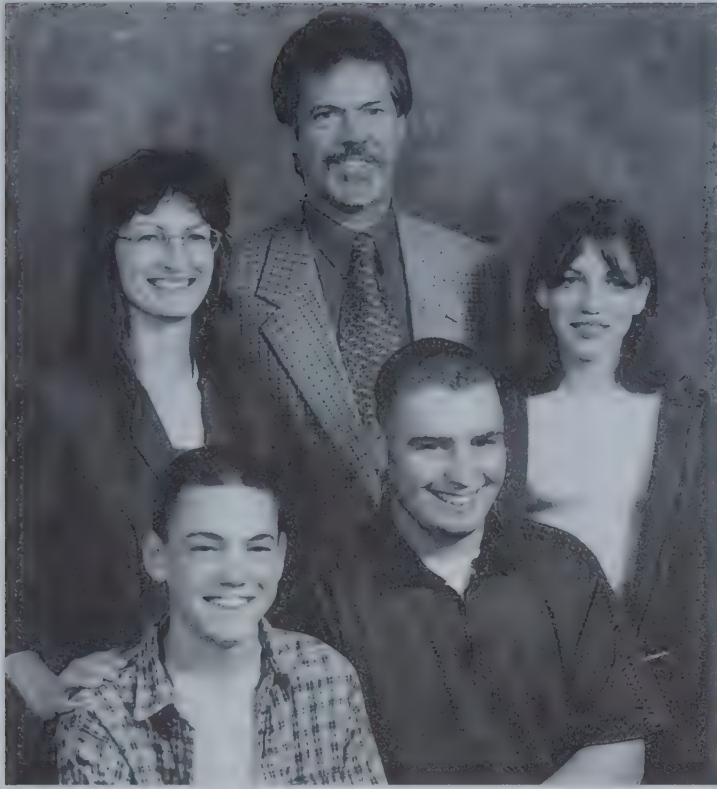


Gary & Sue (Lutz) Bayley's Wedding, Oct. 8, 1988. Andrew Lutz, Anastazia Lutz, Sue & Gary Bayley, Rita Bayley, Kelly Bayley

Sue was born May 13, 1958. Sue started school in 1964 and attended St. Charles School in Mearns. Her first teacher was Sister Mary Bertha. She took her junior high at Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre and graduated from St. Albert High School in 1976.

Sue married Richard Borle (born March 13, 1954) from Riviere Qui Barre on November 18, 1978 at St. Charles Parish in Mearns. They have one child, Gary, who was born January 28, 1982. He works for Penner Farm Services.

Sue remarried on October 8, 1988 to Gary Bayley, born July 11, 1952 from Assiniboia, Saskatchewan. They settled on the former Charlie Mahe place, NW 18-57-25-W4th.



Gary & Sue Bayley Family. Back row: Sue, Gary & Ashley. Front row: Mark & Gary

Sue is Sales Manager for Texcan Cables in Edmonton and Gary is Parts Manager at Legal Motors in Legal. They have two children. Mark was born August 21, 1984 and Ashley was born May 3, 1986. Mark works at the Legal Alfalfa Plant in Legal. Ashley is enrolled at Concordia College in Edmonton in her second year towards a Bachelor of Science degree.

Gary and Mark both reside on the former Joe Hermanutz place on NE 10-57-26-W4th and Ashley resides in St. Albert.

Beaudry, Hippolyte & Catherine (Bruneau-Laurence)

Victor Laurence married Catherine Bruneau in 1886. Together they had eight children.

- Elizabeth who died at 15 months.
- William was reported missing in World War I and was later declared dead in Europe.
- Mary Ellen McLeod (my mother-in-law) lived in Nipawin, Saskatchewan and later moved to Mearns to live with her mother, Catherine Beaudry.



Lutz Family, 1991. Back row L to R: Gary Bayley, Linda Lutz, John Lutz, Maxine Lutz. Middle row: Heather Lutz, Ashley Bayley, Sue Bayley, Andrew Lutz, Anastazia Lutz, Ken Lutz, Kelly Lutz, Lesley Lutz. Front row: Gary Borle, Mark Bayley, Nathan Lutz, Brian Lutz.

- Joseph died in Gunn, Alberta in 1960.
- Annie Hogg lived in Toronto, Ontario for many years. She worked in a factory as a sewing machine operator until 1945. She returned to Alberta and moved to the Mearns district to live with her mother, Catherine Beaudry. They moved to Edmonton and later Annie Hogg lived in Youville in St. Albert until her death in 1989.
- Frances Douglas lived in Guelph, Ontario. Frances died in 1971.
- Jean Laffete lived in Oakville, Ontario. Jean died in 1962.
- Alphonse lived in Slave Lake, Alberta. He died in 1971.

Victor and Catherine Laurence lived around Mearns and in 1917 he died at the age of 55. Catherine remained a widow until 1924 when she married Hippolyte Beaudry and lived near Mearns. Catherine Beaudry later moved to Edmonton and passed away at the age of 95 in 1960.

Benson, Alex Family

From "Decades of the Independence District" (1981)
plus update from the family

Sometime before the turn of the century, a family with the name of Benson migrated to Ontario from Ireland. Two of the sons, Alex and Dick, apprenticed as blacksmiths there and became well established in that occupation.

The two brothers, Alex and Dick, moved to North Dakota and took up homesteads. Sometime later, a group from there decided to venture to Alberta. Alex Benson was one, and at least one of the party was a Whitson. They were able to come as far as Calgary, which was the end of steel. From there they had to drive to Edmonton. Alex Benson was looking for land, eventually filing on a homestead in the Fort Saskatchewan area. Two years later, 1891, the railroad was completed to Edmonton, as far as Strathcona, the south side of the river.

With the coming of the railroad, Alex Benson decided to move to Strathcona. There he built a blacksmith shop and went into business. Later he built a livery barn, rented it and ran the blacksmith shop next to it. To quote A.F. Dreger "To see him shoeing these animals weighing anywhere from 1600 to 1800 pounds was a sight to behold".

Alex married Margaret Bodmer whom he had known in Dakota and she had come to Edmonton. The house they lived in was built before 1900. All the family was born in it except Elwood. The house still stands today between 100 and 101 Street and White Avenue. The family members were Lavina, Gladys, Richard, Olive, Francis, Alex and Elwood.

In 1929 Alex decided to go farming. He bought a quarter section three miles west of Alcomdale, SW 2-57-27-W4. He bought this from Will Shaver, formerly a Shaver homestead. On July 1st, Alex and Margaret with Francis, Alex and Elwood moved out from the city to the farm. Dick, Olive and Lavina were married and living in the city. Gladys was teaching school.

There were no buildings on the land that the Bensons bought but they were able to rent the farm and buildings on the quarter east of them. It was formerly the Measures place, then owned by a well-known photographer in Edmonton, Mr. Mortimer Burgess. During the summer, the Bensons cleared and broke land on their quarter. These two quarters had been rented and farmed by W. Davidson and J. Moore.

In the fall of 1929, Alex Benson suffered a stroke and passed away in October at the age of 72; his son, Alex, carried on with the farming.

Four years later, Mr. Burgess sold his photography business and moved out to his farm. This meant a move for the Bensons. They lived in two granaries in the Burgess yard while their new house was being built on their quarter. Bob McConnel was the carpenter. In July of that year, the Bensons moved in and the granaries were hauled across by horse power. Alex Jr's first love was his horses and he farmed with them for many years. It was in the late forties before he bought his first tractor.

Elwood attended high school in Edmonton and then came to farm with Mrs. Benson and Alex. A few years later they bought the quarter of land across the road to the west from Mrs. Magirl.

Francis married Tom Arlow. They farmed the land adjoining Alex Benson to the north. They had one son, Jerry.

Alex married the former Ella Bailey in 1945. They had five children: Patricia (Dixie), Margaret, Leigh, Ivy and Blake.

- Patricia (Dixie) married Victor Soetaert of Villeneuve where they farm. They have four children: Sandra, Kevin, Loreen and Dale.
- Margaret married Allen Giles. They had two children: Jamie and Jeffrey.
- Leigh married Sharon Thompson of the Busby area and had three children: Casey, Carmen and Chad.
- Ivy married Harold Huntley and they have two children: Candace and Charlene. They live in Edmonton.
- Blake married Alice Domino of Alcomdale and lived on the home farm. They had three children.

Elwood married Orpha Fulton in 1937 and moved across the road, "on the hill". They had six

children: Maxine (born in 1938), Victoria (born in 1940), Heather (born in 1944), Betty (born in 1945), Warren (born in 1953) and Karen (born in 1954).

- Maxine married Andy Michaels of the Sion area in 1957 and had four children: Bonnie (1958) has a daughter Kaily born in 1979; Ricky (1962) married Cindy LaMarche in 1986 and had a son Richard born in 1987; Mona (1963) married Gary Robinson in 1984 and had two daughters, Shannon (1986) and Jessica (1987)... Gary died in 1996; and Garth (1964) who married Colleen Ludlum in 1991. They raised Colleen's son Cody (1986). Andy took a health related retirement in 1991 and passed away in 2003.
- Victoria married Don Davidson of Independence district in 1957 and had five children: Devvy (1958), Joanie (1960), Tammy (1962), Shane (1966) and Tracey (1967). Devvy married Neil Turkington in 1977 and had two children, Kristi and Jason. Kristi married Chris Morkin in 2003 and has two children, Haylie and Terrence. After her divorce, Devvy married Vaughn Paul in 2003. Joanie married Richard Himschoolt in 1981 and has four children: Jolene, married Johan Kruithof in 2006, Joel, married Rogelle Tieulie in 2007, Nathan, Nolan and foster daughter, Jessica part of the family since her birth. Tammy married Tim Kirby and had two children, Cameron and Caitlin. Tammy is now married to David Leel. Shane married Brenda Davies in 2005 and Tracey married Barry Yanosik in 1984. Tracey and Barry have two boys, Cody and Joshua.
- Heather married Allan Brown in 1962 and had three children: Bradley (1962), Roxanne (1963) and Roger (1968). Bradley passed away in 1986 after a lengthy illness. Roxanne married Rick Robinson in 1988 and they have one daughter, Brittany. Roger married Marcie Mills in 1991 and they have one daughter, Cheyanne.
- Betty married Fred Kaup of Riviere Qui Barre in 1963 and had four children: Cindy (1964), Troy (1965), Martin (1966) and Todd (1968). Cindy married Tony Roault in 1984 and they have two children, Candace and Anthony. Troy married Jojilyn Echevere in 2002. They are raising Troy's son Taylor as well as their two children Andrew and Rochel. Martin married Jeannine Bourque in 1987. They have five sons, Issac, Matthew, Jacob, Eli, and Samuel. Todd married Sharon Sport in 1997 and they have two children, Sarah and Luke.
- Warren married Patricia Wagstaff in 1975 and was a minister in Penticton. They had two children, Melissa (1978) and Michael (1980). Michael married Jenn Schultz in 2002.
- Karen married Bill Kanda in 1973 and they had

two children, Willie (1976) and Azure (1978). Azure has a son, Keenen, born in 1997.

Elwood farmed and worked for Canadian Industrial Gas. In 1966 they sold their farm to Gordon Meakin and moved to Edmonton.

Mrs. Benson Sr. moved to Edmonton to live with her daughters in 1945. She passed away in 1965 at the age of 93.

The two Benson families, with Mrs. Benson Sr., all attended the Independence United Church. The children attended Independence and Alcomdale Schools. The families entered into all community activities giving of their time and talents willingly. Mrs. Benson Sr. and Orpha and Ella were long time members of the Independence Women's Institute.

At the present time, all of Orpha and Elwood's family, with the exception of Warren and Trish who are in Hawaii where Warren works, and Warren's daughter, Melissa, all live within an hour drive of Orpha. Many of the family are still in the Alcomdale, Riviere Qui Barre and Morinville area. Orpha lives in a lodge in Edmonton. She celebrated her 90th birthday in 2007. Elwood passed away in 1998 at the age of 83.

The Biddiscombes, George & Joyce (nee Boddez, Firmin) family

By the children

A Family that Works Together

George Biddiscombe and Joyce Boddez were married on August 26, 1958.

George's parents came from England. His father fought in the First World War and won medals that he never claimed. George and Joyce wrote to



George and Joyce (Boddez) Biddiscombe, 1958. Cake made by Josephine Kluthe

England in an effort to obtain these medals to serve as links with the past.

Joyce's grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Rene Boddez, arrived in Edmonton from Belgium in 1910. They were picked up and brought to the very place where the Biddiscombes later lived for many years, farmed at that time by Constant Devolder whose wife was a sister of Joyce's grandmother.

Their first home was in Edmonton where George was employed by Livingstone Glass. Later they moved to the Mearns area and lived on Ray Gibeau's dairy farm. The young family later moved right into the hamlet of Mearns. They rented the old Kennedy place for a summer. At that time Ken, Kathy, Keith and Karrie were 3,2,1 and 0.

While George commuted to Edmonton for work, Joyce stayed very busy being a mom and chief bottle washer. Later they moved to the old Cyre farm, which they purchased from Lewis Falls for \$22,000 in 1963. The farm had been owned by Rene Victoor, followed by Charlie Sheehan, Paul Cyre and then Lewis Falls. The farm had a good barn built by Paul Cyre in about 1918-1919 (which unfortunately, was destroyed by fire many years later).

Within the next five years they were blessed with Sandy, Dean, Kory and Kim. Four boys and four girls kept the family in a constant state of motion.

For the first years Ken, Kathy and Keith went to school at St. Charles and were taught by the Nuns there. All their Baptisms, First Communions and Confirmations were performed in the Mearns church where Joyce and George were married. In the early 1970's, the school closed and all the kids were bused to Camilla School at Riviere Qui Barre where Sandy, Dean, Kory and Kim started school.



Biddiscombe Family – circa 1969. Children all in shirts made by Mom

The farm had a comfortable home but as time went on, it became too small for a family of eight children: Kenny, Kathy, Keith, Karrie, Sandy, Dean, Kory and Kim. The house was bursting at the seams so George and Joyce made plans to renovate their old farmhouse. Besides providing more room, they decided to do a lot of other things. And they did wonders with what they had. Often neighbours could see drywall dust escaping from the doors and windows when Joyce decided to knock down yet another wall. George tells how one day he came home to find an interior bearing wall gone.

Joyce had a dream of bricking the house and the garage. They remembered that Joyce's dad's house near the Egg Lake Coal Mine had burned down some years before and both the basement and the chimney were made of double brick, so Joyce got permission from the owner, Andy Lutz, to dig up the bricks. With eight children to haul bricks from everywhere and eight children with their hands out for extra cash, she had a miniature army willing to work. They were seen everywhere – the Biddiscombes and their wrecking bars. Bricks were found high and low. Joyce and the children took truck load after truck load out of the ashes and rubble of Grandma's basement in Mearns. Other bricks came from Pat Borle's and from the roof of the old Alberta Hotel in Morinville.



Biddiscombe house & garage after renovation

When all the bricks were gathered and piled, the next step was to clean off the mortar to get them ready for use again. They mixed their own cement and when the house was finished they started on the garage. If you were bad you were sent to the brick pile. If you needed money you were sent to the brick pile. This created a great family work ethic.

The finished house brought back memories of blisters and chapped hands as well as happy memories of long hours working together as a family.

The old farm house turned from stucco to brick, from 60's style to 80's in a couple of summers.

Next, the family set about gathering stones from fence lines and fields to provide a stone wall for the rumpus room which was to be done in old English style. The room had a tropical garden with water trickling down from the stone wall into a fish pond surrounded by tropical plants. One more project was to turn the old garage into a sunken living room.

Outside was a grotto made of cement rocks with creeping vines and flowers. The statues around the grotto came from the old St. Emerence church. The Biddiscombe place had a circular driveway, a patio and paved steps leading up to the house.

Joyce was an avid gardener. She loved spending time in her beautiful gardens. Joyce started a perennial garden. During the Commonwealth Games of 1978 in Edmonton, some of her plants were seen at the Coliseum. The kids each had a row of raspberries to pick, eight rows to be picked every two days. If money was needed for fair days, Frontier Days or Klondike Days, there were plenty of potato rows to hoe as well.



Joyce, still as young as ever

There is an old saying that hard work never hurt anyone. Joyce and George seem to be living proof that this was true. Someone saw Joyce one day and said, "Just look at Joyce! She's a grandmother now and she still looks as young as the day she was married."

Entrepreneurship and hard work became the family norm. George worked for two years at Capital Glass and eight years at Livingstone Glass in Edmonton. In 1968 he opened his own business in Westlock called Westlock Glass. Over the years this business has employed four sons, one stepson, and



Biddiscombe Family – Back row L to R: George, Christian, Keith, Ken, Dean, Sandy. Front row: Dorsey, Kathy, Kory, Karrie, Kim

two grandsons. Ken bought it from him in later years when he made his home in Westlock. George and Joyce also purchased a building in Morinville where George, Sandy and Keith started their glass business in 1979. Joyce and her daughter Kathy and later Karrie entered into entrepreneurship with Morinville Floral Boutique and Karrie's Kostumes. Dean owns a glass shop in Redwater and Kory runs her own hairdressing salon. Last, but not least, the baby, Kim, is owner of a Karate Studio (The Rooke School of Karate) in Morinville. George is proud of the fact that none of his kids ever worked for anyone else. They certainly inherited their parent's work ethic.

Joyce and George first entered the world of grandparents when their oldest son, Kenny and his wife Gail, had their son, Trent. The grandchildren now number twenty and the great grandchildren, four. All eight children live in the area and enjoy being close to their siblings.

They now take turns meeting at each other's homes for special occasions.

Joyce passed away in 1984 after a courageous battle with cancer. George eventually sold the farm and moved to Morinville. He married Dorsey Workun in 1995. They reside in Morinville where they have raised Dorsey's son, Christian. He too, now works in the glass business.

George has been in the glass business for 53 years and now claims to be semi-retired. (His family says he still goes in to the shop six days a week). He says he feels blest to still be able to enjoy the work. Another old saying "If you love what you're doing... it's not work!"

Biollo, Charelene & Brian

By Charlene Biollo



Brian and Charelene's 25th Wedding Anniversary. Travis, Brian, Charelene, Kelsey & Chantelle

Brian and I got married on May 26, 1979 in Boyle, Alberta. We made our first home in Edmonton. I went to Grant MacEwan College and took training to become a youth counsellor and Brian went into the trucking business. In 1984 we moved to Cardiff, near Morinville. It was there we started our family.

Our oldest son, Kelsey, was born on December 30, 1985. Two and a half years later our second son, Travis, was born on May 20, 1988.

On June 3, 1993 we moved to a little acreage near Egg Lake Coal Mine on 255529 TWP572. On January 31, 1998 we had our third child, Chantelle. Presently I am at home raising the children and doing office work for our company, Benjies' Bobcat Services. Brian is the owner operator of this company, which we started in 1980.

For the last few years Brian has switched from hauling gravel and asphalt to hauling oilfield equipment and rigs. He still does occasional construction work with the bobcat.

Kelsey has graduated from Sturgeon High School in Namao and intends to take Petroleum Engineering in the fall at NAIT. Travis is in grade eleven at Sturgeon High School and Chantelle is in grade one at Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre.

Home is where your heart is: that would be here in Mearns, Alberta.

Boddez, Firmin & Lorene (Perrott)

Original story by Lorene with additional notes from Marge & Donna



Lorene (Perrott) & Firmin Boddez – 1959

Firmin Boddez was born in 1901 in Ichetyhen, Belgium and came to Canada in 1910. I, Lorene Perrott was born in 1918. It was a bright and balmy day on October 28, 1936 when Firmin and I took the solemn vow of marriage. I was 18 and Firmin 36. I'm sure the thoughts in many minds were doubtful if it would all work out. However, we never looked back.

We moved right out to the farm, three miles east and one mile north of Riviere Qui Barre. Firmin had bought the quarter from Mrs. William Glenn and had been batching there for two years. It was a two-room house.

When we arrived there, after our wedding dance, we found the door barred from the inside and the windows nailed shut. Firmin put his shoulder to the door with a heave. They had put a knife in it, which flew across the kitchen and broke the south window. We also found the bed upside down, with an old white enamel chamber pot put on top of it all. There wasn't any running water or flush toilets in those days. We did not go on a honeymoon either. Firmin and I put the blame on those Sheehan, McRae and McGillis pranksters for the tricks that were played that night!

Our financial situation was really something. We had \$95.00 we could spare from a load of barley. We had two sacks of little potatoes and our wedding cake. The potatoes were so small that they had to be roasted or boiled in their jackets. We had some chickens, milk cows and a few pigs that Firmin had acquired in those bachelor days. Who could go hungry with all that!

I can remember making our first butter by shaking the sour cream in a four-pound jam tin until



The Boddez Family, 1956. Back row: Lorene, Marge, Vic, Gerard, Firmin. Middle row: Joyce, Edgar, Evelyn. Front row: Dennis, Joe, Wayne, Rita. Inset: Donna

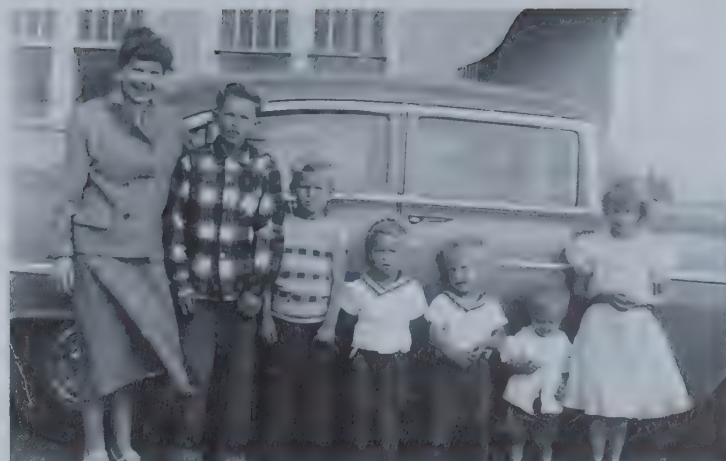
I was red in the face. That churn had to do us for a year until we bought a dash churn at Leonard Comeau's auction sale. Firmin also purchased one of the best milk cows we ever had for \$10.00.

Eleven months after our marriage we were blessed with our first son, Victor. He was brought into the world by Doctor Ferguson, at our home. Then came three girls, Marjorie, Joyce and Evelyn, who were likewise born at home. The girls were all winter babies. They were brought into the world by Doctor Poirier. Dr. Poirier spent the day and night with me and returned throughout the days after to make sure everything was all right, all for the total charge of \$28.00.

By the time our second son, Edgar, was born, things were looking up. I was taken to the General Hospital. Edgar was born in January and by the next spring the two-room shack was bursting at the seams. We then moved on to bigger and better things.

My brother, Charlie, who had bought the store in Riviere Qui Barre, rented us his half section. We now had 500 acres of summer fallow. Therefore, our horses and small tractor had to go so that we could get larger machinery. We held our first auction sale and sold all. Well, as every farmer thought, this was the year it should click. As usual, it didn't. The weather was dry and the fall was wet, and the year after was the same.

Before the three years of renting were up, Charlie and his family were ready to come back to the farm. Our children were going to Camilla School then, and we can remember heating stones in



Joyce, Edgar, Dennis, Wayne, Joe, Gerard and Rita

the oven to warm their feet and blankets on the way to school in the cutter. The snow was so high that sometimes they would tip over and the shafts would break. Firmin and I could see them on top of the hill, fighting with Mother Nature, trying to get home. If they were in real trouble, he went to the rescue.

In 1946 we decided to buy the Fred and May Altmiks farm, a half section one mile north of Egg Lake Coal Mine. We sold our first quarter to my brother, Albert Perrott. We moved to the Mearns area with our five oldest children, Victor, Marge, Joyce, Evelyn and Edgar. Our children caught rides to school with Robert Tellier's children. They had a homemade caboose with an old box heater in it.

Before long, the roads were improved and the school board discussed a bus route. Our worries as far as getting the children to school were over. We had seven more children after we moved to Mearns: Rita and Dennis, Helena, Wayne, Joe, Gerard and Donna. Our little girl Helena passed away six days after her birth.

We had six boys and six girls and raised them in a wholesome Catholic family. Many good times were had with the children playing ball and kick the can with cousins and neighbours. Many days were spent playing at Egg Lake Coal Mine but tragedy struck our family in July of 1958 when two of our children, Rita and Dennis, aged nine and eight, drowned at the mine. The support we received from the caring Mearns community was amazing.

As a family, we took many trips to Waugh and Rossington Bridge to pick blueberries and



Lorene & Firman Boddez Family – Victor, Evelyn, Wayne, Gerard, Marge, Joe, Donna, Firmin, Lorene, Edgar, Joyce

high bush cranberries. Thousands of pounds of raspberries were picked and hours were spent cleaning them to sell. Softball, ice skating, horseback riding, gardening and canning kept the whole family busy. Pilgrimages to St. Albert and Lac St. Anne were always highlights of the year. The Mearns annual June picnic was something to look forward too also.

We all worked hard on the farm. Firmin also worked for Egg Lake Coal Mine in the winter. I sold spin dryers and Amway to help with the family expenses. There were no worries though about income tax with twelve children to write off. Because Firmin was older, he was able to collect old age pension AND family allowance for nine years. Retired with babies!

I was one of the first CWL presidents in Mearns. Sometimes, at the fall suppers and concerts I would recite "Armand de Scau". I once painted myself black and did a Bill Cosby rendition of "Tonsils". Some evenings Firmin would pick up the harmonica or violin and we would sing all evening. He whittled and built rocking chairs and doll cribs for the girls, and bows and arrows, and guns and wooden bullets for the boys. Family was very important and time was spent sharing and experiencing the enjoyment of life.

In 1970, we had another misfortune. The house we were living in at Mearns burnt down along with most of our belongings. It was time to decide if we should build a new house on the other farm or retire in Morinville. The love Firmin had for farming and work kept us debating. Then came an opportunity of a fully furnished home in Morinville. We bought it and moved there, but Firmin still farmed three more years. Finally he was offered a good price for the farm and sold it. Our third and final auction sale was held and he retired in 1974.

More tragedy came to our family when Joyce died of cancer in 1984.

Since then we have bought a modern home in the new development east of the Municipal Building in Morinville, because the basement in the older home could not hold our twenty-seven grandchildren (more to come) and one great-grandson. We have all kept Mearns close and have warmth in our hearts for Mearns and Riviere Qui Barre.

As life goes, we lost more family members. 1993 was particularly bad for the Boddez family as Lorene passed away July 7th, Edgar September 21st and Firmin November 25th. Since then, Wayne passed away July 17, 2003 and Joe, April 27, 2007. As of December 11, 2007, only five of the twelve children born to Lorene and Firmin remain to share their memories.

Boddez, Marcel

By Marcel

Although we consider ourselves "Riviere Qui Barrians", my brothers Don, Rene, Adrian and I did start school in Mearns. In the early 1950's the Mearns school bus came as far as Sandy Beach Road, picked up the Perrotts, Sharon Borle, DeRudders, Krywkos, us Boddez boys and the Goldens, then turned north and headed back to Mearns. Our parents were Jerry and Bessie Boddez and we felt quite comfortable in Mearns as our cousins, Uncle Firman's kids, were there.

St. Charles School was our first introduction to Nuns. Though we came from a relatively strict home we found the School Sisters of Notre Dame even more strict. It was a discipline that a family of boys took a while to get used to. Our mom had a green willow in the warming oven at home for disciplinary purposes but, at school, the nuns had that scary black strap that was kept in their top desk drawer and occasionally tucked into the folds of their habit as they walked the aisles of the classroom. One whack on a pupils' desk would smarten up the whole classroom.

Recesses, however, made up for any hardships. There were ball games, dodge ball, pump-pump pull-away, tag, rope skipping (for the girls) and of course, marbles. As soon as the snow melted, marbles became the main recess and noon hour activity. I still look at a marble today and recognize it as a 'cat's-eye' or a 'steely'. Most humbling was losing marbles to a girl. I'm sure I'm not the only boy who remembers being the victim of Sharon Ellett's deadly aim. To add to excitement at recesses there was the odd settling of boy's differences that resulted in fist fights that would draw the attention of curious fellow students. Hard feelings, however, didn't prevail and the participants were usually good friends by the end of the day.

I recall one beautiful fall day when school seemed out of the question for us. We rode our bikes to the corner as usual then got the idea to stash our bikes in the long grass and wait until the school bus went by. We saw the bus coming and scurried into the ditch and covered ourselves with leaves. The bus pulled up to our corner and stopped. We laid low for what seemed like an awfully long time and waited. Finally the door of the bus opened and the bus driver, Mr. Sheehan, said "Well boys, are you coming to school or just going to lay there in the ditch all day?" We jumped up, brushed ourselves off and got on the bus. I'm not sure Mr. Sheehan believed our story about being in the ditch just to get out of the wind.

In winter there was fox and goose, skating,

crack the whip, and hockey at the Mearns outdoor rink. If coming from home, we often stopped at Mearns General Store to purchase a new hockey stick and a treat.

On the dark side... I can remember smoking Uncle Tom Fitzgerald's Buckingham cigarettes provided by the light fingers of his nephew Dennis and shared generously behind the teacherage. I can still remember the flow of adrenalin as we snuck out to enjoy our covert act of innocent rebellion against the establishment. (To my old teachers out there... how's that for creative writing?)

Like most other farm kids, our lunch pails were used Rogers Golden syrup pails. They were perfect for traveling by bicycle. They would hang from the handlebars of our bikes as we rode the half-mile to the corner each day. They also got us in trouble with our parents because they were occasionally used as soccer balls on the days we walked home. By the end of the year, the lunch pails that survived no longer served the advertising purposes of Rogers Golden syrup as they were scratched and dented and generally in pretty sad shape.

In grade five I began attending school at Riviere Qui Barre but never forgot the friends I made in grades one to four at St. Charles. (As a matter of fact, I married one of them, Janet Sheehan from Mearns). It was eventually in high school that I rejoined many of those friends again as Mearns students were sent to Riviere Qui Barre to complete their high school. I have life long friendships that started in Mearns.

Boddez, Rene & Ellen

By Rene

I'm the second oldest of six boys and one girl born to Jerry Boddez and Elizabeth (Cust) Boddez. I went to Mearns School for grades one to six and



Rene and Ellen Boddez Family in 2006. Standing L to R: Shawn Knight, Deanna (Boddez) Knight and Len Leblanc. Sitting L to R: Rene, Ellen, Marc, Nicole (Boddez) Leblanc holding Troy

then went to Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre. My older brother, Don, and two younger brothers, Marcel and Adrian also went to school there.

Our days started with doing morning chores, then breakfast and it was down the road for $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to catch the school bus at DeRudder's corner. After picking us up, the bus headed east to pick up Krwykos, Goldens, then back west for the Perrotts. The Perrott boys were always late. Dan Sheehan, the bus driver would often shut the engine off and coast down and up Ed Borle's ravine just to give himself a three to five minute delay. I remember those guys being on time maybe once.

Our neighbors were, and still are, good people. Krwykos, Goldens, Pawelkas, and the Perrotts. School days were good. The nuns were strict but fine teachers. Religion was paramount – which was good.

In grade six, my last year at Mearns, we had a new homeroom teacher. It was Simonne (Borle) Sheehan, a first cousin of mine. She was great. (Incidentally, Mrs. Sheehan, I have not yet finished reading my book assignment "The Yearling", but I intend to still do it.)

I can still recall the song we sang for her on the last day of school:

"Thanks to you, Mrs. Sheehan, thanks to you
From the thirty seven pupils of Room Two
We are grateful everyone, for the things that you
have done.

Thanks to you, Mrs. Sheehan, thanks to you."

Growing up we spent a lot of time with the Perrott boys. They were as tough as nails. Winter or summer, most weekends were spent playing hockey, baseball or football, either at their place or ours. I would like to take this opportunity to let them know – namely Art, Ron, Ray and Larry that the few games you did win, sorry, fellows, our dad told us "Let the boys win the odd game if you want them to keep playing". I remember especially one Sunday we were playing hockey at our place. We won, of course, 19-2, if my memory serves me right. The reason this game was even more lopsided than usual, was that Ron quit half way and began making snow angels, so they were short one player. Plus, Art had to keep leaving the game to flip Ron over on his back. I don't know if he even knew how to make snow angels.

I married Ellen Gaunt from Beaverlodge, Alberta. We have two married daughters, Deanna (Boddez) Knight and Nicole (Boddez) Leblanc. I am a grandfather now to Marc Rene and Troy Thomas. I know why grandparents love their grandchildren so much. They are the only ones that we can still impress. No one else will listen, but these guys are genuinely amazed with my tricks and

stories. I will pass on to them some of the advice that my dad gave me. For example, the very odd time that I was in a scrap at school he would say, "Keep your hands in your pockets, boy."

Mearns School for me was great. A first cousin of mine, Edgar Boddez started school there with me, so I felt pretty comfortable. We were friends as well as cousins. Years later he and I shared an apartment and he was the godfather of my oldest daughter.

I have good Mearns school memories of hockey, softball, and friends I have kept to this day. So let's keep the faith that our grandfathers brought over here. Let's watch the politicians. Life is good, carry on!

Boissonnault, Camille & Blanche (Sabourin)

By Blanche Boissonnault

I came from a family of twelve. As I was the second eldest, my sister Angele was held back from school for one year until I was six years old to be able to go to school with her.

The first and second years the school was one and a half miles away. We could not go straight to school. We had to go around a few sloughs.

Finally, the year that my brother started school all the neighbors got together with teams of horses



Camille & Blanche (Sabourin) Boissonnault. Married in 1951



Morinville 4H Club. L to R: Camille Boissonnault, Yvonne Sabourin, Blanche Sabourin, Lucy Kluthe, Romeo Boissonnault, Paul Sabourin, Gordon Hittinger, Patrick Hittinger, Joe Detonnancour, Leon Boissonnault, Roger Tellier & Melvin Hittinger

and scrapers. We cut down some big trees and laid them down on the trail bottom and covered them with soil to make a road across the sloughs.

The logs lasted until I was old enough to have a 4-H calf. I belonged to the Morinville Club.

Grade six and seven was at the Legal Convent. I was back at Egg Lake for grade eight and had a 4-H calf to take care of. My teacher was 17 years old. Her name was Clara Tellier, and I was taller than her!

I married Camille Boissonnault in 1951.

Boisvert, Noe

By children Marcel, Louise, Lorraine & Pauline

Noe was born on a farm east of Legal, Alberta on November 21, 1906. He was the fourth child and first son born of Noel and Emma Boisvert.

He married Marie Rousseau on December 27, 1932. They lived on the farm in Legal until 1934 when they moved to a quarter section of land SE 12-57-26-W4 bordering the northwest side of Egg Lake. The house they lived in was a newly built house of standing squared logs with siding on the outside and v-joint inside. It was built by his father, Noel. The house was warm but small for the family that was raised in it. A wood cook stove was used for cooking and heating, with a wood and coal-burning heater added for the winter. The water in the water pail and washbasin was often frozen in the morning when the heater went out during the night. Lighting was provided by coal oil lamps and, in later years, a Coleman lamp burning high test gasoline was used.

The 1930 depression years were very hard times for Noe trying to make a better living for his young family. He moved to Edmonton and worked at an underground coal mine for a time, then moved and worked at a farm near Vimy and also at a farm near

Legal prior to moving back to his farm at Egg Lake. In October of 1946, the hardships of the depression, the war years, seven children between the ages of 12 years to 18 months and pregnant again, Marie left home, taking 18 month old Richard. Noe's mom, Emma, stayed with the children, doing the washing, ironing, meals, gardening, canning, etc., staying until the older girls were old enough to undertake the day to day duties.

During spring and fall, he worked for Alvin Altmiks on the farm, as well as his own. During the winter he worked at Egg Lake Coal Mine until 1948 when he almost lost his left arm in an accident at the mine. After that he worked as a carpenter for many years. One of the jobs he worked on was helping build the grotto at the church in St Albert, Alberta.

In 1959, Noe sold the farm and moved his family to Morinville, Alberta. In 1965, Noe moved to Fort St. John, B.C. He worked as a maintenance man at one of the hotels until he retired in 1972. He lived with some of his children until he moved to the Legal Chateau in 1976. On July 23, 1977, he married Philomene Ducheneau and lived in Edmonton until they moved to Grande Prairie. Noe died February 19, 1987 and is buried in Legal, Alberta.

Noe's first tractor was a small used Allis Chalmers model B, 1-2 plow, which was used for farming and also for transportation. His first car was a 1929 Essex that was bought from his brother, Pierre. Noe was familiar with the car because it was his dad's last car and he had driven it often before he got married. The car was low mileage as it had been stored on blocks during the depression years. He got the car in approximately 1947-1948.

There were many fun times on the farm, especially on Sunday when our aunts, uncles and cousins would come to play horseshoes and have a corn roast. Music would fill the house when Danny Boisvert would come to visit on his motorcycle with his violin and guitar. In winter, Dad, Marcel and Danny would play crib and the loser would have to shovel the driveway. Marcel and Danny usually had to shovel. Playing cards was also a good way to pass the time. We have many memories of the Tailleux and Mahe families coming to play canasta.

Marcel was born December 12, 1933 on his grandfather's farm east of Legal, Alberta. He married Gertrude Gravelle on November 9, 1953 and had five children. They live on a farm near Lac La Nonne.

Annette was born September 6, 1935 on the farm at Egg Lake with the help of Mrs. Fred Logan as midwife. She married Arthur Leclercq on October 4, 1954. They had six children and now live in Gibbons, Alberta.

Louise was born July 26, 1937 on the farm at

Egg Lake with the help of Mrs. Fred Logan. She married Ralph Price on November 30, 1960. They had two children and live in Grande Prairie, Alberta.

Lorraine was born June 5, 1940 in Edmonton. She married Fred Phillips on June 16, 1962. They had three children and live in Barrhead Alberta.

Pauline was born September 29, 1941 in Edmonton. She married Romeo Ethier on April 16, 1963. They had three children and live on an acreage southwest of Morinville, Alberta.

Denise was born December 3, 1943 in Westlock. She married Melvin Turner on June 15, 1963 and they had two children. Denise passed away October 28, 2002 in a car accident.

Richard was born April 20, 1945. He married Wendy Kuhn on January 14, 1981. They had two children. Richard passed away December 17, 1988 in a trucking accident.

Darlene was born July 5, 1947. She married Alan Leclercq on December 7, 1963. They had two children and live in Camrose, Alberta.

Bokenfohr, Jeff & Marlene

By Jeff & Marlene

Jeff Bokenfohr, born April 24th, 1965, resides with his family on the family farm, which he took over in 2006. The land has been in the Bokenfohr name since 1943. He and his father Joe continue to grow crops in the community. Despite farm struggles, Jeff is pleased of his accomplishments and wouldn't have any other career. He takes interest in specialty crops and enjoys the challenge. He also faces a challenge living with three females.

Jeff married Marlene Bourgeois on February 3, 1990 in the St. Albert Catholic Church. A year and



Marlene, Taylor, Sydney & Jeff Bokenfohr

a bit later little Sydney Anne was born on April 16, 1991. She is in high school, & plans to become a police officer – this way she can keep Mom & Dad in line.

On July 16, 1993, another girl was born. Another gift from God – Taylor Joelle completed the family. She too is an awesome student still exploring the many opportunities out there for her after grade school. She's pondering the thought of engineering.

Marlene's father became ill in 1997, which motivated her to go to University to obtain a degree in nursing. Since her schooling in 2002, Marlene worked in the Westlock region in Acute Care, Home Care, & in Public Health with Health Canada (FNIHB). Marlene currently works part time as a Nurse Manager at Community Care Access (Capital Health).



Taylor & Sydney Bokenfohr

Jeff & Marlene are getting ready for the "boyfriend" stage in which they require that ALL Sydney and Taylor's male "friends" fill out a dating application prior to dating. Sydney & Taylor are avid ringette players both playing on A teams in St. Albert. Jeff and Marlene's winters are kept busy with many ringette events, along with farm management and other duties of a growing farm operation. In past summers, horseback riding was a common thing for the girls to do with an occasional trip to Busby for Gymkana events. The girls also help with yard work and farming but it's questionable whether they enjoy it.

Living in the Mearns community has been an excellent experience with many friends and neighbors. Jeff & Marlene are looking forward to many more wonderful years ahead as they continue to grow in the community.

Bokenfohr, Vince & Carmen

By Vince Bokenfohr

I am the second child of Joe and Lil Bokenfohr, born in Edmonton August 15, 1966 and raised on the farm at NW12-56-26-W4th. Even though I attended grade school in Camilla and Sturgeon Composite High School in Namao, Mearns has provided me with some very fond memories throughout the years.

I had my Confirmation at the Mearns parish and attended many functions there at the hall. The Mearns turkey supper, the hall parties and softball games were attended annually.

John Stevens and I coached the U16 girl's softball for a few years and I was even the president of the Mearns Agricultural Society the year before I left for Calgary in 1991. For the record, the hall closed down a year later when Morris DeRudder was president. All that means is that Morris was able to make a decision. Good job, Morris, darn thing was falling down anyway.



Vince Bokenfohr Family – Bryce, Carmen, Vince, & Ashtin

I married Carmen Lysachok (born December 6, 1968 in Edmonton) of Mayerthorpe on July 27, 1991. We lived in our mobile home on our quarter at SE12-56-26-W4th until I was transferred to Calgary in November of 1992. We had our gift opening at the hall.

Our son, Bryce, was born June 18, 1992 in St. Albert prior to our move and two years later our daughter, Ashtin, was born November 10, 1994 in Calgary.

We are currently living in Airdrie, Alberta, where I am employed with Agricore United as a Senior Grain Merchant and Carmen is a jeweler. However, at the time of writing this (June 6, 2006) I am excited to say that we are moving back to our farm.

Carmen and I are starting a design jewelry store in St. Albert, across from the old Bruin Inn, where Carmen will be able to fulfill her dream of owning and running her own "Concept Jewelry Design" store. I will continue with my same position, working out of the oat cleaning facility across from the coliseum. Our kids are excited about the new opportunities ahead and will be attending Camilla School and later Sturgeon Comp.

We are looking forward to continuing to compile more good memories with the Mearns community.

Bonazew, John & Dorothy

By Dorothy Bonazew

About 1971 or 1972, we bought the property next to the railway tracks, a 10-acre pie shaped piece of land. John was speculating, he was a trucker and had always wanted an acreage. He put this property to good use. We had a few calves, a few piglets and a herd of goats, all at various times. Then John got interested in chuckwagon and chariot racing, so we had lots of horses and lots of fun.

Friends of Alcomdale will remember seeing John exercising his horses, some even catching a chariot ride or perhaps a chuckwagon ride. We had an old school bus we fixed up to pull the horse trailer with living accommodations. We had a busy life at that time, working all week and racing weekends in the summer. There was hay to haul and oats to buy. Jim Falls will remember us getting oats from the elevator.

This went on from 1975 to about 1980; John was trucking quite a bit and then the racing rules changed and life changed. It wasn't so easy to keep up with the changes; feed was high priced, so we changed lifestyle again. We moved back into Edmonton again in 1982. John kept on trucking.

John's father passed away in 1983 and John felt the pull to go back to Ontario where his family all lived. So we wrapped it up in Edmonton in 1986 and moved to Ontario. We had a few good years there, mostly doing a paper route. John passed away in February of 1994 in Barrie, Ontario. I stayed in Ontario until 2001 then moved back to Alberta. I now live in Red Deer.

Borle, Edward & Louise Family

By daughter, Sharon Leibel

At age six I took my red school bag and my red



1934 Wedding. Ed & Louise Borle (on right); George Borle & Harriet Clooten (on left)

metal lunch kit and proceeded down the lane to wait for Mr. Sheehan's school bus. It was a big step for me because I only knew one person in my class, Evelyn Boddez, and she was two grades ahead of me.

All my preschool friends went to the school at Riviere Qui Barre but I was designated to go to Mearns. I was an only child so I had to brave it alone. I soon met my lifelong friend, Marie Krywko, and I spent the first six years of my school life at St. Charles School. I received my First Communion and Confirmation under the tutorage of the Sisters there. I also had my first piano solo at a Christmas concert. I'll never forget how nervous I was. I remember how we used to spend our recess and lunch hours playing pick-up-sticks, jacks, Flying Dutchman and skipping. I remember our softball games where I played outer field.

My father, Edward Borle was born on February 28, 1905. His parents were Valerius (John) and Lucia (DeVolder) Borle who came from Belgium and homesteaded on SE 4-56-26-W4 in the Northwest Territories (Alberta wasn't a province, yet). It came to be known as the Borle homestead. Dad was the fifth of eleven children: Anna, Ferd, Peter, Firmin, Ed, Rose, Prudent, Cecilia, George, Irma and Florent.

My dad helped dig the basement of St. Charles Church at Mearns. It was not their parish but his mother maintained that it was the duty of all Catholics

to help other parishes build their church and sent some of the children to help. Ed attended Belle Valley School and continued farming the family farm.

When he was around ten, the Spanish flu went through the area and my dad talked about the time when they had to wear a mask on their face everywhere they went. One afternoon, on their way to Morinville, they neared a house and there was a pile on the ground below an upstairs window. His father sent him to investigate this and he found bodies. The people were so ill that the only thing they could do when someone died was to shove the bodies out of the window. There was one survivor and my father met one of her family later on in life. Both of Dad's brothers, Peter and Firmin, died in a scarlet fever epidemic.

In 1928 Dad worked in a camp, cutting ties for the railroad. He enjoyed hunting with his friends and would go out for weeks in the winter. My dad had a love of baseball and once pitched a no-hit no-run game. He spoke of his childhood and the sheepskin blankets they slept with and of the time that they attended a St. Patrick's Day celebration in Riviere Qui Barre and upon returning home found that their home had burned down along with all of their household belongings. He also told of a prairie fire that was headed toward the farm and Grandma Borle took all the kids and went down a well until it passed.

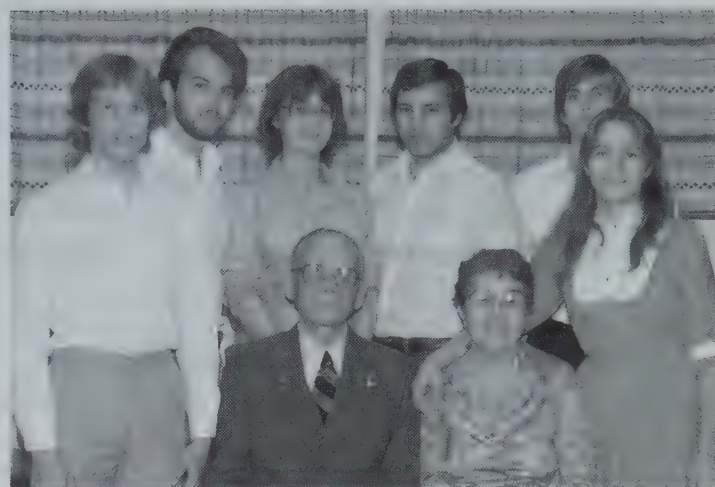


Louise & Edward Borle

The Borle family raised Belgium horses but with the onset of mechanism in farming the era had changed and the switch was made to cattle, pigs and finally straight grain farming.

Dad married Louise Rammelaere from Bashaw on November 28, 1934. She was the only daughter of Adolf Rammelaere and Maerie (Clooten) Rammelaere also of Belgium.

Grandad Rammelaere had helped out on the Borle homestead. He later moved to Edmonton and worked as a dray operator in the mines in Edmonton. There he met Maerie Clooten who



Ed Borle Family. Seated: Ed & Louise; Center Back: Sharon & Dave (Leibel) and four grandchildren

worked as a chambermaid at the Athabasca Hotel. They married and had one daughter, Louise, my mom.

After escaping the flash flood of June 1915 in Edmonton and losing all their belongings, they homesteaded a farm at Bashaw. Upon retiring they moved across the road from their daughter's place. Gramma Rammelaere was a great cook and her cookies and rice pudding were known throughout the district. Adolf had a powerful voice and sang often at celebrations but his pride and joy were his horses.

Dad (Ed) served as Councillor on the Sturgeon Council. He became a school trustee for the Sturgeon School Division and later weed inspector for the Agriculture Service Board. He was an active member of the Lion's Club in Morinville and helped with many parish activities at Riviere Qui Barre.

Mom and Dad moved to St. Albert in 1962 and were both very active in the Seniors' Drop-In Centre. My mom was an avid gardener, a good cook and a good piano player. She spent many hours visiting the aged and sick of the district when they needed extended care at the Youville Seniors Home in St. Albert.

I married David Leibel on April 4, 1964. We had four children and now we have seven grandchildren.

Some of my best hours, when growing up, were spent at Gramma and Grandad Rammelaer's. Since they lived across the road, I could take my dogs and go and visit them almost everyday. Gramma always had the candy jar ready and Grandad would listen to my stories and dreams for hours.

Borle, Harold & Phyllis

By Phyllis

Harold Borle, son of Cyril Borle and Gerarda Boddez, was born on the farm in the old Ray Hotel

on March 27, 1938. He attended Glengary School for grades one to ten and then St. Anthony's College in Edmonton for grades eleven and twelve. After finishing school in June of 1956 he worked locally until April of 1958 and then joined the Royal Canadian Mounted Police serving in Toronto and Belleville, Ontario until April of 1966.

Harold was introduced to Phyllis (Bigg) in Westlock, by cousin Gib Borle, in July of 1956 and they were married in Toronto on September 19, 1960.

After returning to Alberta in 1966, we farmed with Dad (Cyril) and brother George, living in the Villeneuve area for the first year, then purchased our present farm near Mearns from Edgar Ellett. In 1970, Harold took employment with Norcen Energy Resources and worked until retirement in November 1995. Harold has many hobbies and loves the outdoors. He works with and rides his horses, gardens and enjoys camping. In winter he spends time researching interests on the Internet, exercising and running his sled dog team of huskies.

Phyllis was born to Frederick Johnstone Bigg and Gladys Grace (nee Jenner) in Regina, Saskatchewan on March 28, 1938. She lived in Winnipeg, Ottawa and Toronto as a child, spending summers on the farm with her grandparents whenever possible. She moved to Westlock at the age of 15. She completed high school there and then graduated from the Royal Alexandra School of Nursing in Edmonton in March of 1960.



Harold and Phyllis celebrate with their family on their 45th wedding anniversary. Standing L to R: Michael, Harold, Phyllis, Albert. Sitting L to R: Kimberley, Karen, Joanne

After Harold and I were married I worked in hospitals in Toronto and Belleville, Ontario. When we returned to Alberta I was a full time mom until 1981. I then took a refresher course and went back nursing in the Children's Pavilion at the Royal Alexandra Hospital until retirement in 1993. Church and community activities keep me busy and I finally have the time to do the knitting, crocheting and most

of all, quilting projects that I didn't used to have time for. I've discovered that busy hands keep me happy!

We are very blessed to have five children and 15 grandchildren, all living close enough to drop in for any and all occasions. This is what keeps our spirits young.

Kimberly Anne Borle was born on November 7, 1962 and was adopted by us in Toronto in 1963. She started school in Mearns for grade one, then went to Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre and graduated from Sturgeon Composite High School, then on to the University of Alberta and NAIT. Kim is currently employed as a health records analyst for Capital Health. Kim married Norman (Luke) Sabourin on May 26, 1984 and they began their life together in Vimy. They purchased their first home in Cardiff and are presently living in Morinville with their two sons, Tyler Robert, born April 25, 1985 and Justin Michael, born July 24, 1987. Norm works as an operator for Sherritt International in Fort Saskatchewan.

Karen Elaine Borle was born in Belleville, Ontario on November 27, 1964 and she was 15 months old when we moved back to Alberta. She was educated at Camilla School in RQB, graduated from Sturgeon Composite High School and then Grant MacEwan College as a Registered Nurse. She married Jeffery Harold Gravel on August 31, 1985 and tragically Jeff died of cancer in May 1986. Karen has nursed at the U of A Hospital Intensive Care Unit, the Emergency Department at the Sturgeon General Hospital in St. Albert and at the Women's Correctional Facility in Edmonton. Presently she is employed with the Organ Donation Program at the U of A. Karen married Steven Wayne Olivier on June 2, 1991 and they have lived in Edmonton and Beaumont. Steve works as a salesman and they are now living in St Albert with their three daughters: Serena Madelaine, born May 29, 1992; Bethany Victoria, born January 21, 1995; and Alexandra Faith, born October 26, 1997.

Joanne Marie Borle, the youngest of the girls, was born in Alberta during the period of time that we lived in the Villeneuve area. She was educated at Camilla School in RQB, Sturgeon Composite High School, Concordia College and the U of A. Joanne and Dwane Cyril Gravel were married on October 22, 1988 and live on a farm near Highridge where they operate a family dairy. Joanne also works as a language assistant at schools in Westlock. Joanne and Dwane have five children: Jasmine Lacy Anne, born June 25, 1985, is currently in her third year of BsC in Nursing at the U of A; Devon Harold Patrick, born July 6, 1989; Jacqueline Ashley, born June 30,

1991; Dausen Cyril, born June 8, 1994; and Jayde Allysa Rose, born October 21, 1997.

Albert John Borle was the first born after we bought the farm at Mearns. He was educated at Camilla School in RQB, Sturgeon Composite High School and Grant MacEwan College. Albert and his ex-wife, Christine, have two daughters: Miranda Justine, born December 30, 1988, is currently attending Concordia College; and Carissa Joanne, born November 1, 1990. Albert has worked for a number of years in the oil patch and now owns his own company. He currently does contract work as a directional driller. He has lived in Edmonton, St. Albert and Seba Beach. He moved to Weyburn, Saskatchewan in 2006 and daughter Carissa is now living with her dad and going to high school there.

Harold Michael (Mike) Borle, the youngest of the family, was born May 13, 1971. He was educated at Camilla School in RQB, Sturgeon Composite High School and the U of A, graduating with a degree in Forestry. He went to British Columbia for a few years and worked in the forestry industry at Fort St. James. Mike married Valerie Sabourin on May 8, 1993. They were very happy to move back to Alberta where Mike was employed as a Forester, working for ALPAC in Athabasca for three years. He then formed his own company and now contracts with various companies as an environmental consultant. They are presently living in St. Albert. Val has worked as an accountant in Edmonton and Fort St. James and is now enjoying being a housewife and mom to their three children; Matthew Shane, born August 16, 2000; Aaron Michael, born July 17, 2002; and Teresa Ann, born July 16, 2004.

Life in the Mearns area has been great for the "Borle" bunch, the best place on earth to raise our children. Our family remembers many fun days on the farm, building tree forts and rafts to ride during the spring flood. Picking crocus and buttercups in our pasture and finding the first pussy willows in the spring. Our children learned to ride ponies and they played with kittens and puppies in the barn hayloft. Our family raced a chuck wagon and chariot for many years and we traveled with the horses throughout Alberta in an old converted school bus.

The putting down of our roots and making many lasting, lifelong friends makes Mearns the best community for us to live in for the rest of our lives.

Bray, Eugene & Adrian Piton

Extracted from the Jim Halle story

Bray, Eugene and Adrian Piton were neighbours to Jim and Doris Halle.

Adrian Piton, born in 1880, was a French speaking farmer from Belgium who farmed the land where Henry Schafer's place is now located near Mearns. He farmed with his partner Eugene Bray, also a farmer from Belgium. Not a lot is known about Adrian Piton. He was a bachelor all of his life and his relatives were all in Belgium.

It is possible that he and Mr. Bray were First World War Veterans, as I remember the canon shell casings that Mr. Bray used to keep as souvenirs.

I know that he was a close friend and a mentor to my dad, James Halle. Dad used to tell me that Piton (peetaw), as he used to call him, farmed near the Halle's quarter section at Mearns. He was a good farmer and a very good friend. Adrian Piton died in 1947 and is buried just west of the Halle plots in the Mearns Cemetery.

Brenneis, Alex & Vivian (Cantrell)

Alex began working for Alan Mills, of Mills Motors in Alcomdale, in 1951 and continued there for twelve years. During this time Alex also drove school bus for Mr. Mills.

Alex married Vivian Cantrell in 1954. The couple had four daughters; Faye, Darcie, Jo Ann and Carla.

Spring of 1963 brought changes for the family as they purchased SW 20-56-26-W4, which had been farmed by the Art Gill family. As the farm became more established, Alex and Vivian settled into raising cattle and grain farming.

The girls were long time members of the Alcomdale 4-H Beef Club, played local softball, took music lessons and were involved in various school activities, all of which Vivian encouraged and supported. As years have gone by, the girls have established lives and families of their own.

Vivian passed away in 1999, leaving wonderful memories for her family. Alex continues to farm and enjoys the company of their grandchildren.

Brenneis, Ambrose & Rose

Rose (1927), daughter of Nick and Maria Byer, met Ambrose (1925) through a date her older sister set up with her boyfriend, Lawrence Brenneis' younger brother. It was meant to be, as they married July 6, 1949. Their wedding was a double wedding with Rose's brother Joseph, who married Ambrose's sister Evelyn.

Rose and Ambrose started farming 3½ miles south of Morinville, on Highway 2. They lived there for 20 years and then moved. They bought Bob and



Ambrose & Rose Brenneis Family (Children & Spouses). Back: Kevin, Clifford, Harold, Louis. Middle: Neil, Edna, Karen, Debbie, Janice, & Denis; Front: Kathy, Rose, Ambrose & Lois

Phyllis Leahy's farm one mile west and one mile south of Busby.

Moving day was July 1, 1970, a day that rained and rained; the day that Ambrose and Rose found out how muddy Busby's country roads could get. More than once they needed help to be pulled through the mud. The new neighbours were friendly and helpful.

Ambrose and Rose had six children: Janice, Kathleen, Clifford, Lois, Kevin and Harold.

- Janice (1951) married Louis Krywko (Riviere Qui Barre)
- Kathleen (1953) married Neil Busineus (Busby), divorced and married Lynn Stocking (Barrhead)
- Clifford (1954) married Karen Somerville (Leduc)
- Lois (1956) married Denis St. Louis (Pickardville)
- Kevin (1960) married Edna Vandermeulen (Morinville)
- Harold (1965) married Debbie Galliford (Flatbush)

Memories of the farm in Busby include their boys skidooing back and forth with the neighbours: Andersens, Pipkes, Fredericks and Vandermeulens.

Ambrose remembers the bullfight that took place between his and Andersen's bulls. They tore down a long section of fence before they gave up. Ambrose remembers looking for his bull after and finding him sitting on his hind end in the water of a creek, a very amusing sight.

Rose remembers the tornado of 1984 that went through their yard leaving a mess of broken trees and rolled over granaries. Rose and Harold were at home mowing grass and quickly took cover in the house. The strong winds blew furiously through the open windows of the house.

Besides farming, Ambrose and Rose were the mail couriers for Busby from 1981 to 1990, when they decided it was time to retire. At that time they bought a house in Westlock and moved there.



Ambrose & Rose Brenneis with their grandchildren, 1997. Jody, Thomas, Dean, Brittany, Mark, Geoffrey, Christopher, Colleen, Shawna, Cindy, Kayla, Bonnie, Randi, Darrel, Steven, Cory, Benjamin, Rose, Wesley, Ambrose, Susan, Jeannine, Tina, Sheila. Missing is Scott



Ambrose & Rose with their great-grandchildren, 2002. Kyra, Ambrose, Liam, Rose, Brittany, Makayla, Danica, Chelsea, Daphne, Brodrick. Missing are Rhiannon, Kayleigh and Korben.

Harold and Debbie farmed the home farm for a few years then sold it and moved to Flatbush.

In 1999, Ambrose and Rose came back to the Busby church and Alcomdale Hall to celebrate their 50th Wedding Anniversary. They continue to live in their Westlock home. Their greatest joy was always their children and now they enjoy their 20 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren.

Brenneis, Dan & Grace

By Dan Brenneis

I, Dan, am the second son of Ed and Elise Brenneis, born at home (which was one mile east and two and a half miles south of Morinville) on May 30, 1928.

One of my earliest memories is of sitting in a little wagon near the woodpile and Mom coming running with a broom, as the neighbour's red bull was about to come into the yard. I dreamed about that bull quite often growing up. I started school at the convent in Morinville when I was six years old. It was a three and a half mile trip to school. My older brother, Maurice, and I started the same year; we were the only kids at the convent who did not speak French. It is a good thing that the nuns took pity on us and we were not picked on too much. Most of the kids in school were boarders at the convent. We were amongst the few day scholars. The next year, when there were three of us going to school, Dad had a two-wheel cart built by a local blacksmith; it had rubber tires and was quite smooth riding. We used this in the summer and a cutter in the winter.

In 1940, Dad sold the farm at Morinville and we moved to the farm two miles south of Alcomdale (N½ 19-56-26-W4th). I remember on the March moving day, we had nine teams of horses pulling sleighs with hayracks and grain tanks moving all



Dan & Grace Brenneis, Married June 15, 1953

our supplies. I drove a team of horses with a grain box full of coal and wood.

Growing up on a farm, harvest was always a busy time, what with cutting and stooking. Threshing was a favourite time for me. At age 15, myself and Robert and Angus Morrison kept two racks busy, hauling bundles to the threshing machine. There were six racks hauling bundles to keep the machine busy. The days were long; the machine started at 7:00 a.m. and ran until 7:00 p.m. with an hour break for dinner. This was also a busy time for the cooks, with breakfast at 6:00 a.m., dinner at noon, lunch at 4:00 p.m. and supper at 7:00 p.m. for at least eight men.

In the fall of 1948, I started as a second man at the United Grain Growers (UGG) elevator at Mearns, with Hugh Kennedy as manager. I worked for four months that year. The following year I was hired full time at UGG in Volmer. I stayed at Volmer until June 1951 when I was transferred to UGG Alcomdale.

On June 15, 1953, I married Grace Borle, daughter of Cyril and Gerarda Borle of Villeneuve. We moved into the UGG company house in Alcomdale. Our rent those first few years was \$15

per month. Our first daughter, Dawne, was born in 1954, followed by Violet in 1955, Alan in 1958, Albert in 1962, and Pamela in 1964.

During this time we lived in a house 24' x 30' without running water (unless we ran from the well to the house with the water!). We had a 'Warm Morning Heater' in our partial basement and a coal and wood stove to heat the house. In 1964 the company moved the house to its present location and added a 12' x 24' living room and remodeled the rest of the house, adding insulation. We moved into the renovated house in January 1965. It was a real treat to have water and sewer.

The next years were busy ones with five kids in school, music lessons, school sports, and drama clubs. It seemed that the car was on the road most of the time. It was a good thing that Grace drove, as she did most of the running.

We were members of the Alcomdale Community League and the Curling Club. I worked as caretaker and icemaker for many years, and for a few years we also ran the concession booth. Grace, with the help of the kids, was busy cooking hamburgers and making pies, especially on bonspiel weekends. Grace was also involved with the Alcomdale 4-H Sewing Club as assistant leader for a few years and then as a leader. She has her 10-year pin for 4-H leadership. We were members of the Morinville Yellow Rock square dancers for many years, and are currently members of the Mearns Senior's Club and Alcomdale Community League.



Dan Brenneis Family, June 15, 2003. Back (L-R): Violet, Albert, Dawne, Alan, and Pam; Sitting: Grace & Dan

We still belong to St. Charles Parish at Mearns. Grace joined the C.W.L. shortly after we were married and got her 50-year pin a couple of years ago. I do not remember missing Mass, except for illness or poor weather conditions.

I retired as Elevator Manager on August 30, 1992 after 42 years of service. We made our home in Alcomdale right up until the summer of 2007 when we moved to West Country Hearth in Villeneuve. We are proud grandparents of six (four boys and two girls) and great grandparents of two girls.

Life has been good, and we are fortunate to live in such a great and beautiful country.

Brenneis, David

By Lawrence Brenneis Family

David first met Margaret Mary Mensink when he was introduced to her by Uncle Ambrose. Margaret was a warm loving woman who could always be depended on to give you a hug whether you needed one or not. Their nieces and nephews loved her. She always told Andy to never stop giving such strong hugs. She was always one who could take a good joke. Marg did the books for Dave when he opened up the Shell Service Centre in Morinville. One day they were busy doing whatever needed to be done when Uncle Ray Brenneis came in and asked if they were going to the Brenneis wedding that weekend. Margaret said "Wedding? What wedding Dave?? Are we going??" Uncle Ray said, "Well, I hope so. You're the bride!" They were married May 29, 1982.

On September 3, 1984, Philip David was born. He was a big baby and the apple of his mom and dad's eye. We often teased Dave that he wasn't even



David & Margaret Brenneis – Mearns Church – May 1982

there to contribute to Phil because he was all Margaret – the spitting image of his mom. Dave and Marg lived in Legal till 1989 when they sold the house and bought an acreage east of Morinville. Here, Phil started school in Namao. Phil was the first student on Gordon Saffin's new bus and he rode on the same bus for twelve years.

In 1991, Dave decided not to buy the Shell Service Station lot because the environmental cleanup would have been too costly so he sold his tools to Roger Morin and went to work for him. After doing the same job for someone else that he had been doing for himself (only took six months) Dave decided to reopen his shop in the Morinville Industrial Park and has been there since.



David & Margaret with son Philip – 1991

Margaret got very ill in the summer of 1995. She fought a courageous battle with cancer until she passed away on July 20, 1996. She died at the age of 36 years. Too soon!

Approximately five years ago Dave noticed a tall beautiful woman who worked at Drayden Insurance for the Alberta Registries. He, of course, needed to go in there once in a while to make an acquaintance. When I asked how they finally started going out, he said that one night it was snowing and blowing and he knew that she lived one mile north of Johnny and Yvonne Kluthe, in a trailer with her four children. So, since he was out cleaning his yard and his shop yard, he decided to go and clean her yard. She wasn't home at the time so he didn't go in because he didn't want to scare the kids. He said they started going skidooing and things just



Dave Brenneis & Renee Catling, 2001

continued on till her and the kids moved into the house just east of Morinville. It has been a great fit.

Her name is Renee Catling (nee Kowalchuck) from St. Albert. The boys fit right in with Greg's boys and her daughter Jolene is a great girl. Philip now has the big family that he had when he babysat at my house for six years.

Philip has recently started with Ron Hodgson and lives in West Edmonton with his cousin Jeremy Herbert. Jolene was born April 29, 1983. She has her own condo in St. Albert and is working as a house painter. Travis was born March 7, 1989.



Back row: Philip Brenneis, Travis Catling; Front row: Harley Catling, Jolene Catling, and Tyson Catling – 2005

Travis is living at home and working this summer as a welder's helper. He is in grade eleven this year. Harly was born March 9, 1991. He works at Dave's shop and will be heading into grade nine. Tyson was born May 15, 1993. He stays at home and will be taking on grade seven this year.

Renee said that when Phil was living at home he really didn't talk much but now when he comes home he talks her ear off. He misses her. He was only twelve when he lost his mom so Renee is a good stand in. Renee is an exercising outdoors nut. She always welcomes us into her home, the one they bought north of Morinville three years ago. She assures us that we can have the kitchen, as she just loves the break. As of June 2004, Renee quit her job of seven years at Drayden Insurance and has started pulling wrenches at Dave's repair shop. She loves it here!

Brenneis, Ed & Elise (Elizabeth)

By son, Dan Brenneis

Dad was born to Johann Brenneis and Margaret Streit in Humphrey, Nebraska on July 9, 1902. He was the seventh of 14 children, eleven of whom grew to adulthood. In March of 1905, Johann and



Ed and Elise on their wedding day June 1, 1926

Margaret moved to Alberta and settled on a farm four miles south of Morinville.

Mom was born on a farm four miles south and one and one-quarter mile east of Morinville. She was born in 1904, the second of 14 children born to Joseph Behiels and Mary Soetaert. All fourteen children, seven boys and seven girls, grew to adulthood.

Dad and Mom both attended Roseridge School, which was located three-quarters of a mile east and one mile south of the Behiels' home. Dad had a bit longer walk, as he lived another mile and a half west of the Behiels' home. Dad recalls that Grandpa Behiels stopped him on the first day that Mom and her older sister Julma started school and asked him to take care of his girls. Little did he know then that he would spend 57 years loving and taking care of Mom.

Dad remembers that Mom and Julma spent the first day of school walking arm in arm around the school. They spoke no English, Flemish being the language spoken at home. Dad and Mom recalled walking to school with neighbours, the Kiesers and the Isekes; they all travelled the last mile to school together. One day Dad must have had trouble with a couple of the Kieser boys at school. On the way home, a couple of them caught Dad and tried to make him eat horse manure, which was plentiful in those days. Dad got away from them and taunted them, calling them "red-haired sons of b----" and then ran. Fortunately he could outrun them!



Violet, Ed and Elise Brenneis with Vera in front

Mom was a boarder in the convent at Morinville in the fall of 1918 when the flu struck. She remembers seeing the hearse go by daily with people being buried. The flu hit mostly adults; one family lost everyone – father, mother, and three adult children. Her mom and dad and some of her brothers and sisters got the flu, but fortunately no one died. No one died in Dad's family either.

In 1918, Dad's family built a three-storey brick home that is still standing today. Mom's family built a new, 12-room, three-storey brick home in 1919. Sadly, it burned down in February of 1939.

Mom and Dad were married on June 1, 1926, and moved into a new home one mile east and two and a half miles south of Morinville. They owned a quarter section of land and, with a few cattle, horses, pigs, and chickens, they settled into farm life. In May 1927, their first son, Maurice, was born. Dan followed in May 1928. Alex arrived in September 1929. Their first daughter, Violet, was born in September 1930, followed by four sons, Ralph in January 1932, Oscar in February 1933, Oliver in July 1934, and Norman in July 1937.

We all marvel at how Mom and Dad fed and clothed us during the depression years. We never went hungry and were always well clothed. Mom did a lot of sewing and Dad rented land to make ends meet.

In 1931, Mom's younger sister Cecilia (Sue) came to live with us after their mother died in 1928. She became like an older sister to us kids and was a great help to Mom.

On March 12, 1940, after having been either partially or completely hauled out in seven years of 14 on the farm. Mom and Dad sold the farm south of Morinville and moved to a farm N½ 19-56-26-W4 located two miles south of Alcomdale. In 1942

a second daughter, Vera, was born, loved, and spoiled by her older brothers and sister.

The church in Mearns was Mom and Dad's parish for 40 years. Mom was an active member of the CWL. We don't remember ever missing mass, except during the odd blizzard. Their good example and caring faith was passed on to their children, who all attend church regularly.

In the early 1970s, Mom began having ulcers on her leg. She doctored these ulcers for a couple of years and finally, on March 7, 1974, she had her leg amputated above the knee. She learned to walk again with an artificial limb and a walker. Dad had a heart attack in 1971 but recovered quite well. They continued to live in their own home until August 1, 1980 when they moved into Chateau Mission Court in St. Albert.

Mom died in the hospital in St. Albert on January 5, 1983. Dad died in the hospital in St. Albert on October 21, 1988.

Brenneis, Greg & Karen

By the Lawrence Brenneis family



Ed & Elise Brenneis Family – Back row: Oscar, Maurice, Dan, Norman, Oliver, Ralph, Alex; Front row: Vera, Elise, Ed, Violet



Karen & Greg Brenneis – August 1993

Greg, son of Lawrence Brenneis, is the youngest of the crowd and he gave us grey hair, or at least me, fairly often in his teen years. In search of work, he took off to Fort McMurray in the fall of 1982. There he met and married his first wife Darlene Cardinal. Darlene had a cute little son Adam, who was a year old at the wedding. His date of birth was March 21, 1981. Their divorce was final in October of 1987.

By this time, Greg had been working at Suncor for some time already. Then on February 4, 1988 he was pushed into going out to the bar, Bronco Billy's, with his cowboy friend Nolan. There he met Karen Elizabeth Chandler, celebrating her "going to shake the cold of Fort McMurray out of her bones" as she was moving back to her beloved B.C. with her friend. She had just given her notice so she needed to stay for two weeks to finish her time. But during that time Greg broke his leg while skidooing on the river. He hit an ice heave, caught it with his foot, twisted his leg around, blew out his knee and broke his femur. They Medivaced him off the ice to Edmonton, to the University Hospital, where they put a pin in his leg and three screws in his knee. Karen told me they had to bend the pin to match his other bowed leg.

They had only known each other three weeks and since he couldn't work and she was without a job, why not take a trip to show him off to Mom and Dad Chandler in B.C.? They borrowed an old Bronco from Wally DeRudder, put his little camperette on it and drove down to meet the future in-laws. Greg had gone down to 165 lbs during his hospital stay and Karen told her Mom, "I love him Mom, but he's too skinny". Her Mom wisely told her "Don't worry, that'll come," and "yes" it did!!!

At this time Darlene was an angry woman and cleaned out Greg's account, so Karen had to work as a waitress to earn money so they could go home. She also got robbed of fifty dollars in the staffroom where she worked. When they arrived back in Fort McMurray, Karen got a job with a parts department. They lived three doors down from where Adam lived and he really liked to come over, which caused problems with his mom, Darlene.

Greg and Karen eventually bought a trailer and lot and she became pregnant with their first child. She had trouble with gestational diabetes, so spent a lot of time following her favorite baseball team, the Toronto Blue Jays. She was a player herself. Their son wanted to make his debut on October 25, 1992 during the last game of the World Series. Karen was in labor for three hours all the while watching the game. Greg finally took her to the hospital where Wyatt Ronald was finally born four hours later. Greg always wanted a "Wyatt" in spite of us teasing him

and we wouldn't trade him! Karen's mom came up and spent several weeks with her and the baby, a time that Karen cherishes because not soon after that Karen's mom started her fight with breast cancer.

Greg and Karen had not planned to marry since it was the second time around for both of them, but Greg wanted to make it permanent. So unbeknownst to Karen, he bought a ring and tried to give it to her one evening. He wanted her to find it on her own and Karen is a "bling-bling" kind of girl. (She admits it!) He kept putting the ring box in her way, on the back of the biffy, on the armchair, but she kept missing it. Finally he said, "Here, take this. Don't you see anything??" That's when Karen realized she was getting married again. Greg and Karen were married on August 14, 1993, on our 22nd wedding anniversary. The date was also shared with Gloria and Rick. Karen and Greg just had a small quiet wedding in Fort McMurray and sent the video to her parents. Karen treasures this memory because her mother lost her battle with cancer one week later.



Brenneis Family. Wyatt, Karen & Greg; Nolan Brenneis in front.

By this time Karen had been working with ATCO Power for two years. On January 6, 1995 Karen gave birth to Nolan Gregory, named after the friend who introduced them. This really pleased him and he gave little Nolan his "All Around Cowboy Buckle" he had won. It is our Nolan's treasured possession. Though they don't have contact with Adam and Darlene any more, they still see her mom and have a good relationship with Mr. and Mrs. Cardinal.

Greg and Karen have since bought an acreage in Spare Creek, just outside of Fort McMurray, within a five minute walk of the ski hill. They literally took a chunk of bush and chopped out their yard site, which in itself is a big job but with two little ones added to the mix, it was a huge job. Lots of MUD! They bought a modular home and had it moved up on what seemed to be the wettest spring ever. Greg called me and said, "I'm building a swimming pool". They sold their trailer and in the tight housing market of Fort McMurray they moved into an apartment for a month here and a month there. Delays with the house and the basement caused no end to their problems. Finally the house made it up and the truck slid into the corner of the basement causing a crack. Karen is not English for nothing and she took on the cause—fighting for restitution. She got it – several times for different causes. Karen fights for her rights!!

Karen and Greg have built themselves a beautiful home and they always have the door open to any niece or nephew who wants to come and work up in Fort McMurray. Andrew and Daniel both have taken them up on their offer and spent time up there, building and working with their aunt and uncle. The fit, as I said, was good because Dave's boys thoroughly enjoy Greg's boys, however, I'm not sure the trikes, bikes and quads are up to the test. They drowned three last week!!

Someone else who has joined our family is Karen's dad. Although he lives in B.C., he always wants to be included in our family reunions and always contributes to the new great grandchildren as they come along. His name is Ronald Chandler. We enjoy him very much.

Brenneis, Kevin & Edna (Vandermeulen)

By Edna Brenneis

My mom and dad had four kids in a row. Why so close together, I will never understand. I, Edna Marie, was born in August 1961. Jeannette Louise was born in July 1962 and Lynn Patricia was born in November 1963. Our brother, Terry Glenn, was born in November 1964.

Living on the Bourbonnais farm was the best part of my growing years. I remember swimming in the creek on our neighbor Joe and Evelyn Lutz's farm with my good friends Marie Lutz and Judy Schafers. Marie, Judy and I spent much time together with sleepovers and get-togethers.

My sisters and I went to school in Mearns. I went from grades one to three, my sister Jenny for grades one and two and Lynn for grade one before attending Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre. I

remember my parents' comments about how the teachers and the Sisters gave out way too much candy in school. We didn't mind that at all!

There are many things about that school that I remember vividly. There was a wooden sidewalk along the side of the school that seemed to me to be about six inches off the ground. When the weather was rainy, the area beside it was muddy and you better be careful who you walked beside on that sidewalk. If you were little, you might get pushed off in the crowd. This happened to me once and I did not like the experience of falling in the mud to have an all day drying cake of mud on my tights. I asked one of the Sisters if I could have my tights washed and I quickly learned that they did not run a laundry service.

I remember the set of stairs and especially the hook for my coat. Every time I have been back to the Mearns School for an event such as a wedding shower, I would go down to the basement and have a look at my old coat hook. I think it was about three or four from the left of the stairs. Today this good old hook is gone, as the Mearns School has been demolished. Isn't it silly what you can hang on to (no pun intended) from your childhood?

Underneath that hook was the place for my boots. And I remember my boots too, and my bus driver, Mr. Johnny Polakovits. Sometimes, in the winter, there wasn't a lot of heat in the school basement. My boots would get stiff and, if I couldn't get them on in time, I would miss the bus. I would stand outside at the school and hope like heck that Mr. Polakovits would find out that I was missing. If he didn't, I would be stranded at school and boy would my parents be mad! I don't remember how many times I had trouble with my boots and missed the bus but Mr. "P" did not leave me stranded. He would come back and get me after realizing that I wasn't on the bus. Thank you, Mr. "P"!

The Sisters left me with many memories as well. One in particular is from the night of a federal election. It was during the height of "Trudeaumania". I remember that my sister Jenny and I were sitting in the living room in the Sisters' convent located next to the school. I believe my parents were counting ballots or some such thing over in the school, as the election was going on. The Sisters were glued to the TV watching the outcome of the federal election and explaining things in simple terms to us as we watched with them history-in-the-making, as the results were announced on TV. However, none of this really makes sense because I have no idea where my younger sister Lynn and little brother Terry were at the time.

After grade three I attended Camilla School. In

these years I remember a lot of support from the community. When I was ten years old I joined the Camilla 4-H Clothing Club. Often times I caught a ride with other 4-H families. I remember riding with the Oliver Brenneis family. I appreciate it to this day since sewing is one of my biggest hobbies.

Living on the Bourbonnais farm was like living in a grand palace owned by a Candy Man. The house we lived in was big; it had hot and cold running water and a real bathroom. There were plenty of outbuildings to play in and places for straw and kittens. And what could be better than when Mr. B would come to visit. We kids used to call him "the Candy Man". He would bring one roll of butterscotch flavored Life Savers and it's hard to believe that just one Life Saver was enough to make us jump all around him like a bunch of young pups just waiting for that ONE Life Saver! Today any typical kid would want a whole roll of Life Savers!

When I was twelve years old my parents decided to find a place of their own, since Mr. B decided to sell his property. If I am not mistaken, it was three quarters of land and he was asking \$75,000 at that time. I knew I would miss that place which I had learned to call "home".

I did not like the move to Busby. This was a huge step down. By then I was in junior high school. My bus ride was an hour long. My brother, sisters and I went to St. Mary School in Westlock but we weren't the only new kids in school. We soon found out that all the other Busby kids were new to St. Mary's as well because the Busby School only went to grade six. My parents did not want some of us going to school in Westlock and some of us going to school in Busby only to later make another switch to Westlock later on. So they arranged for all four of us to go to St. Mary's right from the beginning. Other parents in the area followed suit. So I was thought of as a Busby kid, not a new kid.

At one point the bus route and the bus driver changed. There was a new group of kids on our bus. This is where I spent a lot of time with my future husband, Kevin Brenneis. We have known each other since grade ten. Kevin's parents, Ambrose and Rose Brenneis, had moved earlier from the Morinville area to the Busby area to farm. Kevin and his younger brother, Harold, became frequent visitors to our place a few miles west, either by skidoo, motorbike or the old dusty station wagon. At the same time Kevin and I got to know each other, Harold and my brother Terry became good friends.

Kevin and I were married on August 15, 1981 in the St. Charles Church in Mearns. Kevin apprenticed at NAIT and became a journeyman carpenter. He now works for the City of St. Albert in the

Building/Maintenance Department and has much to do with city owned buildings. After high school I went to NAIT and became a Medical Laboratory Technologist. I have worked at the Sturgeon General Hospital in St. Albert since 1981 with the exception of a one year temporary position at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in 2003. We have two children, Deanna born April 20, 1990 and Wesley born June 29, 1992.

Our kids keep us busy driving them all over the country for sports and activities with friends. We live on an acreage four miles north of Morinville which also keeps us busy with unending yard work. In addition to that, I have somehow managed to put in seven years of volunteer work on various committees for the Alberta College of Medical Laboratory Technologists. During that time I was mainly involved with the development of the Health Professions Act.

My sister, Jeannette or Jenny as we like to call her, was once known by relatives as "the little Dutch girl". She was the blonde one in the family and at a young age looked like a little Dutch girl. But she grew up to have the brawn in the family. She became taller and stronger than me. Unfortunately, this often meant that she was asked to do things like milk the cow! Jenny learned to take no guff from anyone. When she left home she enrolled in the Engineering and Designer Drafting class at NAIT, despite the fact that there were very few females in her class. Jenny has had a variety of positions, which recently included off-site work at diamond mines in the far north. Jenny is married to Lawrence Boychuk. They have one son Chad, born in October 1983 and now live in Spruce Grove, Alberta.

My sister Lynn is married to Gerard St. Gelais. She has her hands full with four children: Jonathan, born December 1986, Rita, born May 1988, Judy, born January 1993 and David, born May 1994. Lynn and Gerard are busy with their kids as well. Jonathan and Rita have both attended Air Cadets in which they have completed many programs. Jonathan hopes to attend the Royal Military College to become a helicopter pilot. Gerard works at the Calgary International Airport as an aircraft parts inspector.

Lynn has come the closest to fame in our family. She has had a number of positions that often involve driving. She has driven school bus in the City of Calgary, a city transit bus, but most notably she drives a stretch limousine for a private businessman. On occasion she is asked to drive dignitaries and people in the movie making business. Her rides have included the noted actor Christopher Plummer and entourages for Kevin Costner. Even though she was

instructed not to socialize with him, she couldn't help but to smile and warn Kevin Costner to look out for the bears after dropping him off at a secret location in Banff. He smiled back! This is what happens when you inherit a good share of the bubbly personality in the family!

My brother Terry was an active young man. He drove a dirt bike. I took one and only one ride with him on that bumpy thing. One day while he was driving home west as the sun was going down, he hit a bunch of pigs on the road and skidded out on his dirt bike. He had a bad case of "road rash". Around that time he dropped a pipe on his foot while working on a chicken farm. So Terry had his share of typical scrapes and bruises that he chalked up to everyday living.

Not long after, Terry deteriorated and finally went with my mom to see a doctor. He was admitted to the hospital straight from the doctor's office. To make a long story short, it turned out that by this point Terry had suffered some heart damage from an unknown cause. He was admitted to the Sturgeon General Hospital where I worked. It was a difficult time, knowing the extent of his illness and the likely prognosis. There he received treatment while the doctors tried to determine the cause of his heart damage. Eventually his condition got worse. Terry was admitted to the Royal Alexandra Hospital and later to the University of Alberta Hospital. At this point in time heart transplants were newly offered by Dr. Dennis Modry and his medical team. Unfortunately Terry was not eligible for a heart transplant because the damage was too severe to both his heart and surrounding circulatory system. After three surgeries, two of which were open heart, and eleven months of illness, Terry passed away on September 26, 1986, shortly before his twenty second birthday. Terry is interred in the St. Charles Cemetery where his maternal grandparents were buried along with his Uncle Simon Houle.

After the death of my brother, life on the farm was very lonely and upsetting for my parents. My parents went their separate ways. My mom Julie eventually moved to St. Albert. My dad remarried and lives in St. Albert with his new wife, Josie. My dad still spends many hours in his fishing boat as he once did when we were kids. He is a very good fisherman and has taken his grandsons, Chad and Wesley, out fishing with him. Dad is now semi-retired and works at the RCMP office in St. Albert as a guard.

My mom keeps herself busy. After moving to St. Albert she joined the church choir and the St. Albert Singers Guild, which has between fifty to seventy members. With this group she has traveled to

Victoria, Vancouver, Kelowna and Eastbank, B.C. and various places in Saskatchewan as well. Locally, they have performed at the Arden Theatre in St. Albert, the Winspear Center and the Jubilee Auditorium in Edmonton. Mom met a new friend, Helen, and with a mutual love of music they both went out dancing as many as four times a week! Mom has met many other new friends over the recent years and has had a variety of different jobs. She worked for a time at the Newman Theological College as a cook.

Sometimes my mom is hard to find at home or get on the telephone. She still sews and gardens. She is very proud of her home and is always finding some kind of home improvement project to keep her place looking the sharpest on her block. At the first skiff of snow she is out sweeping her sidewalk. At the first fall of leaves she is out raking. I'm sure some of her neighbors get tired just watching her. But this is just how my mom is and I am grateful for learning valuable life lessons such as this from her and my dad.

Brenneis, Lawrence & Teresa

By daughter, Carol Vandersteen

Teresa was the second youngest of the Maria and Nicholas Byer family. Mom was born May 21, 1925. She shared her birthday with her mother, Maria. Mom attended Normal School in Camrose to gain her teaching certificate and taught in Fort Assiniboine in 1944, as well as Belle Valley School. Aunt Rose found a picture in a museum out there. If my calculations are correct, Mom was 19 at the time and she taught four years before she got married.

Lawrence and Teresa met at a local dance, I'm told. Aunt Evelyn said that she thinks her and Uncle Joe and Aunt Irene and Uncle Tony got together first and introduced the others. She said when you went to the dances you always filled up the car. The more the merrier! They were a part of a unique group of people who intermarried – four Byers married four Brenneis. It broke down to two sisters and two brothers who married two brothers, a sister and a cousin.

Ambrose Brenneis married Rose Byer, Lawrence Brenneis married Teresa Byer, Evelyn Brenneis married Joe Byer and Irene Brenneis (cousin) married Tony Byer. Now keep that straight!! As a group of cousins, double cousins, as it were, we had a blast, all 17 of us. It didn't really matter whether we spent Christmas at the Brenneis' or New Years at the Byers' we were going to be together during the holidays! Since the families



Lawrence & Teresa Brenneis, October 19, 1948

were within 10 miles of each other, we grew up quite close and had fun.

At this writing my dad, Lawrence, doesn't remember very much about their first years so I will have to use my aunts and uncles to fill in the blanks as best I can. Uncle Ambrose tells me that Dad bought the farm from Alex Morrison and they moved on to it after they married on October 19, 1948 in the Mearns church. Dad bought two quarters of land just outside of Mearns. The quarters were diagonal from each other, such that the railway dissected our land in two areas.

My memories of the old house are of two bedrooms, a kitchen and a cellar. I believe I remember the cellar because I fell down into the big yawning, dark pit (a child's memory). I believe Mom had a miscarriage before I was born. I also believe this started her lifelong struggle with nervous breakdowns. I was born on July 15, 1951 on a day, as my dad loved to tell me, it was pouring cats and dogs and I was too small to go out and get one. I believe Dad had a hard time getting Mom to the hospital in his old car (I think it was a Model A or T with curtains) down those dirt roads. I was named Carol Ann Mary after both of my grandmothers.

This also started my dad calling me by my dreaded nickname, Annie. Not sure why I disliked it, but I did.

Within a year, on December 2, 1952, David Carl was born. David has a unique birthday, as you will come to see. David was born on Uncle Ambrose's birthday, as well as cousin Jerry from Auntie Evelyn and Uncle Joe's family. The truth of the matter is that both women had the same doctor. When Auntie Evelyn had Jerry she told the doctor to get Mom in so she would have company. Well, the next morning, guess who was walking down the hall but Dad, having just brought Mom in to have David. Three hours apart, she says. But that's not the end of the story, so keep reading.

David was a typical boy, having a great time growing up with friends close by, the Ricard boys, Jimmy and Guy, and the Banack boys, Tommy and Wayne. I remember many a time being upset with the guys because they would have come home and tracked up my clean, scrubbed floor or have left the bread and butter out on the counter after making sandwiches. It sometimes felt as if we had four extra brothers.



Lawrence & Teresa Brenneis, Christmas 1971

Two years later came our sister, Gloria Mary on November 15, 1954. Gloria was a cute little blue-eyed blond with a quick sense of humour. Gloria was a studious child but also very witty. However, I remember several times that when Gloria got sick as a child, she was very ill. She ran high fevers and Dad's way to combat fevers was with mustard plasters. All of us remember these, but I think Gloria was the child who had them most often. She claims

to have learned early on to be a diplomat as a middle child, but I, as the older sibling, recall it more of siding with whom it was most advantageous for her at the time (perspective, eh!)

A year and 17 days later, Mom gave birth to Dianne Irene on December 2, 1955 – David's birthday! Now you know the history of December 2nd and the close connections of the three families. Dianne, I remember as a quiet child, but man was she stubborn and did she have a temper when she got upset! Although I was five years older, I distinctly remember her pinning a licking on me! The girl was strong. She worked outside feeding chickens and carrying water to the chickens, and she developed muscles. We all lived in the little house for several years and I also believe Mom had at least one nervous breakdown during this time.

Three years later Mom had Gregory Lawrence on April 9, 1958. We were building a new house at this time and my first memory of seeing my new brother was by kerosene lamp in the kitchen of the new house. I also seem to remember this as the time when we moved into the house. Mom brought the baby home to the new house.

Greg was always trying to keep up with us older kids and consequently got himself into trouble at times. When he was two years old or so, he was on the kitchen table climbing around in a box and fell off the table cracking his skull open and requiring stitches. Thus began Greg's career with injuries of some sort or another. Our house was never completely finished so we did not have steps to the front door that opened out onto the lawn, with the drop of about three to four feet. Well, it was a lot of fun to run from the kitchen, through the living room, and jump out the door to the ground, except when you landed wrong and broke your leg as Greg did. I do remember that bent leg! I believe that stopped that activity. Although we had times of fun we also had times of work. Greg was stripping bark off of fence posts for Dad when a piece of bark went into his eye, resulting in him having to wear an eye patch for a while. I'm not sure how old he was at this time but I also remember he froze his ear as well. I remember it swelled up to a huge size and must have been very painful. To this day he has a difficult time when it is cold and windy, and guess where he lives – Fort McMurray.

Mom went back to work teaching at St. Charles School in Mearns when Greg was in grade one. Dave, Dianne and Gloria had Mom as a teacher. Mom was called Mom at school and Mrs. Brenneis at home, of course to great teasing from those who had not done it until we did. Mom wore a hearing aide, as she was deaf in one ear and hard of hearing

in the other. Well, imagine some 30 odd pencils scratching on paper, it could drive you crazy, so she would turn it down but then you couldn't get her attention except to go up and tap her on the shoulder. Mom never complained. Hearing aides have improved, I hope.

In talking to Dave, he tells me he was probably Mom's worst student, especially in grade two when she was subbing. He said he hooked his ruler in the back of Ruth Schafers desk, pulled it back, put an eraser on the top of it and let it fly, hitting the blackboard right beside Mom's head. I asked if something was done at home and he said YES! Trouble at school meant trouble at home and he was much better in grade four when she was his full-time teacher. Boy, was I ever a good student, much better than Dave!

Aunt Evelyn said that one day they were at our house visiting. Gloria was a toddler and Dianne was a wee babe. Her son, Ivan, four months younger than Gloria, went over to touch the little baby and Gloria, being the older sister, smacked him, protecting Dianne. Well, the next week we were over there and Gloria was going to touch Ivan's toys and he smacked her. Turn about was fair play! Speaking of Ivan, who can forget that horrible cowboy hat he wore when he came to our house! Aunt Evelyn said that my dad offered him \$5.00 for it but he would not sell it. I seem to remember something about that. Ivan, Dave and Greg would always try to make Dad's poor calves buck while they rode them. They got in trouble for this because they would ride the weight off of the calves. Not too good for the fall sale prices, guys.

Although they didn't have any children, Aunt Irene and Uncle Tony took care of my little sisters when Mom was in the hospital. Uncle Tony was a great joker and always found dimes behind our ears and could somehow blow smoke out of his ears! Aunt Irene says that every evening the girls would wrestle with Uncle Tony, trying to sit on his knee. They developed a good friendship with the Wulff girls, Linda and Dianne, who lived across the way. Aunt and Uncle lived on the old Byer homestead. Aunt also said that she put out a little table in the garage for the girls and they played having tea parties out there. At one time she had all four girls. A little tough for someone who didn't have any of her own children!

We lost Mom on May 18 of 1972 when she was 46 years old. She was buried on her 47th birthday, May 21, 1972. She died from "acute coronary insufficiency associated with a pre-existing coronary heart disease" according to the Coroner's report. Mom had not been feeling well so had been

scheduled to see a heart doctor about surgery, as she knew that she had a heart murmur, but died three days before her appointment. It was a great shock to the whole family.

I was just married and only twenty years of age. Dave was just out of high school, working in Edmonton and only nineteen years old. Gloria was in high school, graduating that weekend. Her Grad was the day after Mom's funeral. She was not going to go until our Aunt Jean Brenneis called and said "I think you need to go because your Mom was so proud of you for graduating and it was really important to her." So Gloria, Dave and I went to the Graduation ceremonies and mention was made of her situation. I have always been grateful to Aunt Jean for having the courage to say something when we were all in so much grief. Wonderful woman!

Dianne was sixteen and in grade eleven when Mom died and did her best to function at home with Dad and Greg, who was only thirteen when he lost Mom. Many times I have felt so sorry for him as a lost little boy and as I had my own children I wished I could have the time back to take the pain away. I just want to hold that lost little boy. Several months before she died, a dear friend of Mom's lost her son in an electrocution accident. Mom wrote her a letter to say that those of us left behind needed to carry on in order to make that other person's life mean something. And we have tried to honour Mom by doing that. Although we had a deep time of grief, we did have a good life in Mearns.

I lived within two miles of my two best friends, Claire Kieser, now Stitsen, (I take full credit for that... me and the choir loft... great place for boy watching, and Tony is my cousin), and Rita Kluthe, now Rita Boyd. We all have memories of herding cows in for milking from across the tracks to the north of the house and then back twice a day. In spite of doing this every day for the summer we only had, I believe, two accidents of cows being hit by the train. We did not have any accidents of cows being hit by cars, even though we had to negotiate two public roads. We also herded the young calves to the pasture across the tracks to the east, just off of what we called Fraser Lake.

Dad sold the farm in late 1974, I believe, and moved into Morinville to the house on 97th Street. Around this time, he started to work at Paul Kane High School in St. Albert as a janitor. Several years later he took a job as the warehouse man for the school district. He worked there until he retired in 1985 at the age of 65. Dad was active in his church and community as well as being Grandpa who showed up at baseball games, concerts and recitals.

In 1990, after 18 years of being a widower, he



"Dad loved his pets!" Lawrence Brenneis in Westlock Extended Care, 2004

married Anna Montpellier. They lived in the house in Morinville until Dad could not be cared for in the home anymore, at which time they moved to Morinville Heritage Lodge. Dad remained there for about a year when, due to increasing health issues and strokes, which led to an Alzheimer's type of illness, he was moved to the Royal Alex Hospital for three months. We finally were able to place Dad in the Westlock Hospital in the extended care unit where he stayed until the fall of 2004. He was then moved to the Westlock Nursing Home, as were all the patients so that the hospital could open up more active care beds.

Memories

Cookies!! Dianne said no story would be complete without a mention of Grandma Byer's cookies. They were the best and always in the shape of a chicken or a bunny rabbit. Speaking of her baking she made something we called snowball; a melt-in-your-mouth pastry that was dusted with icing sugar. To die for!!!

Roxanne said there wouldn't be too much to write about her but she forgot to whom she was talking to. You see, I'm her mom and I KNOW!! She was a very busy girl and you'll understand when I'm done. When she was three she was really happy because Dad was building a sand box for them. Well, she climbed on the wheelbarrow full of sand

and it fell over onto her leg and bent it!!! Heck – it broke. She did not let that stop her – she rode her trike, (boy, did the people on the street do a double take when they saw a child with a cast from the top of her thigh to over her foot, only toes sticking out, riding down the sidewalk!), went in the pool on holidays, hoisted her leg up on the side and sat on the steps and wore out three full casts.

At the age of ten she was upset with her brothers and stormed up the basement stairs, fell over the side and broke her arm. At summer camp she was playing a game involving a ball and was going to get the ball but her head met with the front teeth of another girl; four stitches later she was asking “why do these things happen to me?” My answer was, “Because you live life to the fullest”. No wonder she lives in China. Oh, by the way, there were dislocated fingers, shoulders and recently a chopped off and reattached fingertip. Yup, she’s related to uncle Greg!

I hope you have enjoyed our story. Mearns holds a warm place in our hearts. There we had family, good friends and many good times. As I drive by to see Dad in Westlock, I never tire of seeing the church that Mom and Dad were married in. I was baptized there as well as married there. Wonderful memories!!

Dad passed away on November 13, 2005 at the age of 85 years. He is once more at Mom’s side, back in the arms of the community of Mearns. He is at peace and so are we.

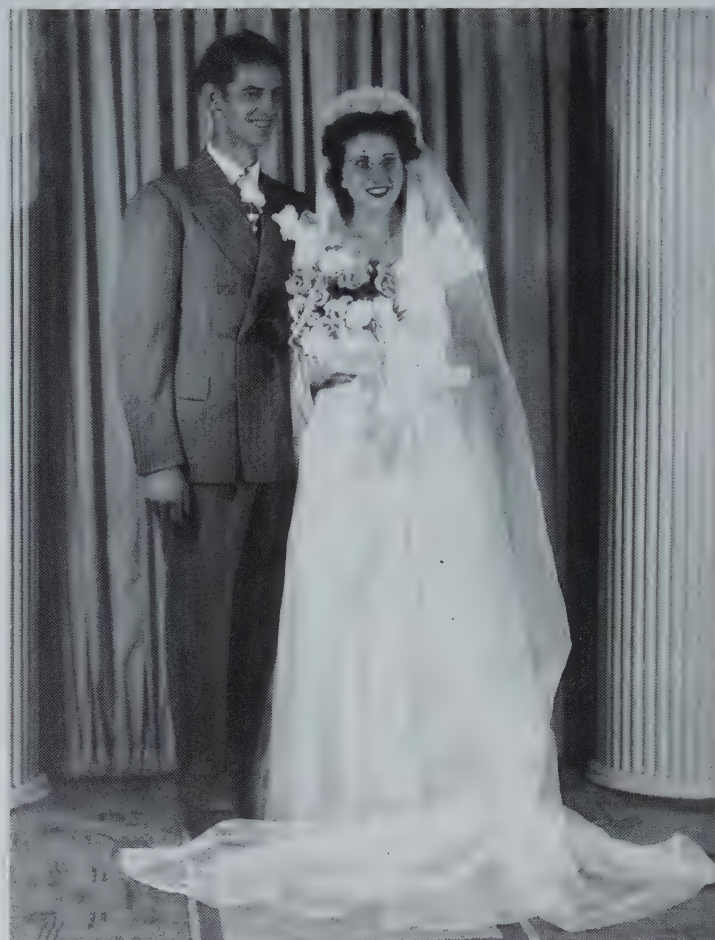
Brenneis, Leo & Honnoreana (DeRudder)

By daughter, Sandra Carnegie

Leo and Honnoreana were married August 5, 1947 at Riviere Qui Barre. They lived in Morinville and then settled down to live at Egg Lake Coal Mine. Leo worked for North American Road and worked as the Manager of Egg Lake Coal Mine. Leo and Honnoreana had seven children who all went to school in Mearns until it closed. From there they went to Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre. Their parish was St. Charles in Mearns. To this day some of the children are still parishioners there. Honnoreana’s children have fond memories of home... “I can still smell the cinnamon buns that mom made, hot and ready to eat when we got off the bus.”

Leo and Honnoreana’s children were Wayne, Merle, Brian, Bernadette (Bernie), Dale, Sandra and Roy.

Wayne married (Marlene) Toma of Calahoo. They had two daughters, Sherri & Charmaine. Sherri married Brian Lazaruk and they live in Edmonton.



Leo & Honnoreana Brenneis were married August 5, 1947.

Charmaine married Jesper Hansen and they live in Denmark with their two children, Anja and Thomas. Wayne passed away in 2006.

Merle married (Terry) Meinczinger of Busby. They had two daughters, Terra and Amber. Terra is married to Richard Hawkins. They live in Fort McMurray and have one daughter, Mykenzie. Amber lives in Edmonton. Merle is sadly missed by family, as he was lost to cancer on October 17, 1998.

Brian married (Denise) Paquette of Calahoo. They had one daughter, Nicole, and two sons, Brad and Jared. Nicole married Brad Nestor and they live in Morinville. They have one son, Kolby and one on the way. Brad lives in Winterburn.

Bernadette married (Bernie) Bill Sutherland and they live at LacLaNonne. They have one daughter Carla and one son Grant. Carla is married to Tony Brewer. They lived in Fort McMurray and then moved to Calahoo in 2006. They have two daughters, Alivia and Alexa and one on the way. Grant and Tanya live in Spruce Grove and have one daughter, Cassidy.

Dale married (Ann-Marie) Bulloch of Fort McMurray. They have three children, JoyceLynn, Jason and Ashley. JoyceLynn lives in Fort McMurray and has one daughter, Jayda. Jason has one son, Brayden.



Leo & Honnoreana Brenneis family.

Sandra married (Neil) Carnegie of Alcomdale. They have three daughters, Kandis, Cory and Amy.

Roy married (Judy) Johns of Morinville. They have one son, Jeff, and one daughter, Nadine.

Leo and Honnoreana moved to Morinville in 1974. Leo continued to work at the mine. On April 20, 1976, Honnoreana was lost to cancer. On March 14, 1986 Leo was lost due to a heart attack. Both are buried in Morinville.

Brenneis, Leonard & Irene

By family

Leonard and Irene were married July 22, 1947 in Morinville, Alberta. Leonard was named Joseph Leonard but went by the name of Leonard. He was born July 3, 1922 at the family farm by Morinville. His parents were Otto Carl Brenneis and Annie Iseke.

Irene Julia Mary Van Lersberghe (Lesberg) was born November 2, 1923 in Villeneuve, Alberta. Her parents were Eduardus Van Lersberghe and Maria Vanden Briele.



Leonard & Irene Brenneis Family. Back row: Eric, Don, Irene, Dwayne. Front row: Darrell, Lorraine, Leonard, Glen, Gilbert Brenneis, Leonard & Irene

Leonard and Irene had a mixed farm on land located between Mearns and Alcomdale, S½ 4-57-26-W4. In 1971 they sold the farm and moved to Morinville to live. Leonard worked for the Edmonton Public Stockyards.

Leonard and Irene were blessed with seven children, one girl and six boys:

Lorraine Maria, June 30, 1948

Edward Donald, September 23, 1950

Darrell Camile, November 25, 1952

Gilbert Lawrence, October 30, 1954

Glenn George, November 20, 1957

Eric Ernest, June 2, 1961 and

Dwayne Donald, November 30, 1962.

On the farm cows were milked and pigs were raised. Chickens were also raised for meat and eggs, which were sold to the store in Alcomdale. Irene also had a large garden every year. The children went to school in Mearns until grade nine and then finished their schooling in Riviere Qui Barre or Morinville. Lorraine graduated from Camilla High School in Riviere Qui Barre in approximately 1965 and was the valedictorian for her grade 12 class.

Irene died October 12, 1993 and was buried in the Morinville cemetery.

Lorraine married Emile Cloutier in 1966 at St. Charles Church in Mearns. The boys later married and are now living in Morinville.

In 1987 Leonard retired. In 1996 he sold his house and lived with Annie Kieser Pelletier in St. Albert. Annie and Leonard went to school together as children. Leonard died December 18, 2007 and was buried in the Morinville cemetery.

Brenneis, Marvin & Joyce (Kieser)

By Joyce Brenneis



Michael Brenneis, Shay Brenneis, Carrie Brenneis (Boisvert), Russell Kieftenbeld, Christie Kieftenbeld (Brenneis), Rylin Kieftenbeld, Marvin Brenneis, Josh Konanz, Declin Kieftenbeld, Joyce Brenneis (Kieser), Tyler Konanz, Hayden Brenneis, Keegan Brenneis, Julie Konanz (Brenneis). Missing: Neal Konanz

When Dad and Mom (Robert & Laura Kieser) moved from the Kieser homestead south of Morinville in 1959, Mearns became our family home and has remained so throughout the years.

Some of my fondest memories were meeting neighbors at the church picnics, having ice cream at the Mearns store after church, working and visiting with the neighbors, berry picking, and harvest time when the uncles came to help. Neighbors helped each other and then would enjoy barn dances and gatherings. The farmhouse was quite small but Mom and Dad worked hard, together with us kids, to make it our family home where we have celebrated many events. We went to school in Mearns from grades one to six, then to Riviere Qui Barre and then the long bus ride to St. Albert High where I graduated. During High School, I enjoyed working in the summer at the bee farm in Alcomdale. After graduation, I was off to the big city of Edmonton to work at the Royal Bank.

In 1974, I married Marvin Brenneis, son of Adele (DeRudder) and Andrew Brenneis and we purchased our first home in Morinville. Our first child, Julie, was born in 1976 and then our son, Michael, in 1978. Because of my fond memories of living and growing up in the country as a child, we decided to take up the offer of an acreage and build a home near my parents, Robert and Laura Kieser. So in 1980, after the completion of our home, I, along with my family, was back 'home'. Christie was born in 1983, which then completed our family.

Now we were involved in school activities such as soccer, volleyball, basketball, skating and community gatherings. Since our children grew up near their grandparents, this gave them a strong, loving, caring quality of life. We enjoyed working together, looking after each other more and playing cards all night. We also enjoyed camping and just the plain old country living. When the kids were all in school, I went back to work at the Royal Bank and then to the Sturgeon County where I am still working today. This is what country living is all about. In 1998 we purchased a small cabin at Lac St. Anne in the small Summer Village of Ross Haven. We had many family gatherings and lots of summer fun there. The kids loved boating, doing lots of water sports and many fun campfires. We continue to enjoy family time there and during the summer the kids still love coming out with their families and everyone seems to meet there every weekend.

Our children have continued to enjoy the country life with their own families. Julie married Neal Konanz from Saskatchewan in 1998 and they have two wonderful boys, Tyler and Josh. They live in an acreage subdivision called Dover Estates by

Calahoo. Julie teaches pre kindergarten and Neal works at the Remand Centre. Michael married Carrie Boisvert from Villeneuve in 2001. They have three wonderful boys, Hayden, Keegan, and Shay. They have continued the family tradition to live near Mearns and their grandparents and parents. Michael is a loader operator at Inland Aggregates by Villeneuve and Carrie worked at Pro-Western Plastics but now stays home with the boys. Christie married Russell Kieftenbeld from Riviere Qui Barre in 2004. They also have two wonderful boys, Declin and Rylin. In keeping the family tradition, they too are living by Riviere Qui Barre near the Kieftenbeld farm to enjoy country living. Russell has his automotive service technician journeyman ticket, but now is employed in construction and is working towards his carpentry journeyman ticket. After university, Christie worked at Woody's RV World, but now stays home with the boys.

The family 'Home' in Mearns is enjoyed even more by the addition of seven wonderful grandsons and maybe more...

Brenneis, Merle & Theresa (Meinczinger)

I, Theresa (Terry) was born in Calgary on June 20, 1949 and lived there with my parents, Matt and Mary Meinczinger for two years. We then moved to the Busby area where my parents started farming.

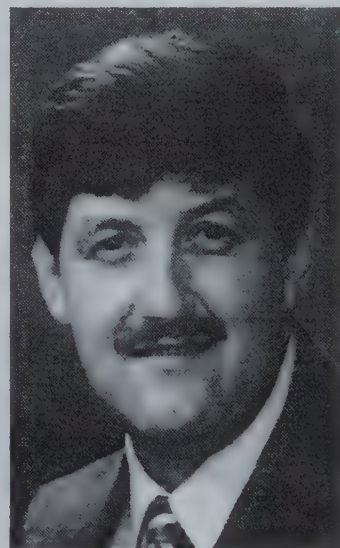
I attended school in Busby until completion of grade nine and finished my schooling in R.F. Staples High School in Westlock, graduating in 1967.

After graduation I moved to Edmonton and started working for a life insurance company doing secretarial work. In June of 1970 I married Merle Brenneis, son of Leo and Honnoreana Brenneis from the Morinville area.

Merle and I continued to live and work in Edmonton until the birth of our first daughter, Terra Lynn in May of 1974.

We then moved to the Egg Lake Coal Mine near Morinville during which time we began construction of our first home on an acreage near Busby. Our second daughter, Amber Jade, was born in January of 1977, shortly after which we moved into our new home.

Merle and I both



Merle Brenneis

commuted to Edmonton; Merle was a journeyman in the auto body repair business and I, in the printing industry. Merle passed away in 1998 at the age of 48.

I have two sisters and one brother. Lorraine (Lee) married to Wayne Nickerson, farming in the Camrose area; Elaine married to Bradley Jones, living and working in Edmonton; and Matthew Jr. (Sonny!) married Doris Paquette and is farming in the Busby area.

Brenneis, Michael & Loreen

I was born on August 27, 1970, the youngest of five children of Oliver and Louise Brenneis. I was lucky to go to Play School in Mearns where my mom was one of my teachers. I started kindergarten at Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre and stayed there to grade nine. High school meant traveling to Sturgeon Composite High School at Namao. I got on the bus at approximately 7:30 a.m., so often we would try to car pool.

Growing up, I played hockey in Riviere Qui Barre. Some of my team mates were Kory Perrott, Doug Kinsella, Mark Boddez, Jim Boddez and Sean Fitzgerald. Many of us continued to play junior hockey in Gibbons while moving on to post-secondary education. We are now all married and continue to keep in touch. We still meet at the hockey rink to play ourselves or to watch our children play.

On May 28, 1988 I was master of ceremonies for our graduation ceremonies. After graduation I decided to enroll in the Faculty of Business at the University of Alberta. I majored in Accounting and graduated with distinction in 1992. All the while I lived at home in the loft. There were times that I helped out on the farm, occasionally drove school bus, played hockey and studied for my exams. Times were good but usually busy.

On May 2, 1992, two weeks after finishing



Michael and Loreen Brenneis with their sons Colton and Dawson

university, I married Loreen Soetaert in Villeneuve. We lived at my home for three weeks until we took possession of our condominium in the subdivision of Castledowns in Edmonton. I began articling with Price Waterhouse in downtown Edmonton where I had worked as a summer student. That same summer I began studying for my Provincial Qualification Exam as a Chartered Accountant. I completed that in August of 1992. One exam over, I continued to work and study for my National Uniform Final Exam (UFE), which I wrote in September 1993.

At that same time Loreen started law school and graduated from the University of Alberta in 1995. After completing articling in Edmonton, Loreen was admitted to the Bar on July 26, 1996 and became an associate at Robinson & Company in Spruce Grove, where she continues to practice today.

The results of my UFE exam were released in December 1993. I passed my last exam and was presented as a chartered accountant. I continued to work at Price Waterhouse until November 1996 when I took a position as financial manager of St. Albert Protestant Separate School Board No. 6. I am still there today as Associate Superintendent of Finance, Board Treasurer. Currently I am also the president of the Association of School Business Officials of Alberta.

In May 1996 Loreen and I moved back to the farm and lived in the home of my grandparents, Edward and Elizabeth Brenneis. Our first son, Dawson Michael Alexander was born July 9, 1999. He shares the same birthday as his Grandpa Oliver and great Grandpa Edward Brenneis. Dawson, they say, looks like me, loves to farm and is currently in grade one at Camilla School.

Our second son, Colten Jackson Joseph Brenneis, was born on May 17, 2001. Colten has a gorgeous head of red hair, which is a trait from his grandma, Louise, who sadly passed away March 4, 2001. Colten also loves to farm and is especially fond of horses. He is presently in ABC 123 in Calahoo. Both Dawson and Colten have started hockey in Riviere Qui Barre this fall. Maybe someday Dawson, Colten and I can play together on the Soetaert team at the Family Hockey Tournament.

Loreen and I, now with the help of Dawson and Colten, are fortunate to also grain farm and raise beef cattle and horses with Dad on the Brenneis home place. In April 2004 we switched houses in the farmyard with Dad, which has been a great chance for us to continue to raise our family on the farm and in the Mearns community.

Brenneis, Neal & Jeannie

Neal Joseph Brenneis is the third child of Oliver and Louise Brenneis. He was born on September 23, 1962. He attended St. Charles School in Mearns for his grade one then, after the school closed down, attended Camilla School at Riviere Qui Barre. After graduating from High School at Sturgeon Comp, he started apprenticing as an electrician and received his journeyman's ticket. He worked as an electrician for a number of years, then was hired on by Transalta, where he obtained his certification as a Journeyman Lineman. He has since worked for the company, now called Altalink, and is presently a Transmission Maintenance Assistant.

In 1987 Neil married Jeannie (Desranleau) from Dapp. They have three boys, Hayden, born 1990, Austin, born 1992 and Carter, born 1996. They live on an acreage near Alcomdale. Neal and his boys enjoy helping Grandpa on the family farm, while Jeannie prefers to stay on the other side of the fence away from the cattle.

Brenneis, Norman & Johanna

Norman Brenneis, son of Edward and Elizabeth Brenneis, was born in 1937 in Morinville, Alberta. Johanna Kluthe, daughter of Joseph and Emma Kluthe (stepmother Helena) was born in 1939 in Mearns, Alberta. Norman and Johanna both attended Mearns School.

They married in October 1959. Norman was employed with the Edmonton Police Service for 35 years. They have four children: Dale, Karen, Kelly and Shauna.

Dale married Lorada Cumming of Edmonton in October 1987. They have three children: Tyler, born in 1989, Rheann, born in 1992, and Logan, born in 1996. Dale has been employed with the Edmonton Police Service for over 25 years.



Norman and Johanna (Kluthe) Brenneis

Karen married Darryl Ashurst of Ontario in August 1997. They have one son, Carter, born in 1995. Karen was divorced in 2006. She is employed with Capital Health.

Kelly married Rick McKinnon of Edmonton in September 1990. They have two children: Kelsi, born in 1991, and Elyse, born in 1997. Kelly is employed with Community Services.

Shauna married Dale Cherpin of Radville, Saskatchewan in April 1998. They have three children: Rylee, born in 1999, Blake, born in 2001, and Drew, born in 2004. Shauna is a stay-at-home mom.



Norman and Johanna Brenneis' four children. L to R: Dale, Karen, Kelly, Shauna

Brenneis, Oliver & Louise (Altmiks)

Oliver was born on July 9, 1934 in Edmonton, Alberta. Oliver is the seventh child of Edward and Elizabeth Brenneis. Ed and Elise moved from one mile west and half mile south of Cardiff to the Mearns area on March 12, 1940. The current farm site is still owned by Oliver today. Oliver went to school at Belle Valley to grade seven. He was the last janitor of the Belle Valley School and earned eight dollars a month for his work. The family drove the horses and cutter to school. After Belle Valley School, Oliver transferred to the Mearns School, which wasn't much bigger than Belle Valley, with eight classes in one room. In Oliver's grade there were twelve students.

Louise was born August 19, 1939 in Edmonton. Louise was the second child of Alvin and Mary Altmiks. She spent her entire life in the Mearns area, a community she was very proud of. Louise loved the farm and would often tell her grandchildren how she used to ride horses bareback. Who had time to put a saddle on the horse? Louise started school at Egg Lake and completed grade two before moving on to Mearns School. Later she



Oliver and Louise (Altmiks) Brenneis married on July 14, 1959 by Father Gregory Rijniers

transferred to Camilla where she completed her high school. After graduating high school, Louise went to work at IGA in Morinville.

Oliver and Louise were married on July 14, 1959 in Mearns. At that time Oliver and Louise purchased land from Oliver's dad and built a new home on Ed and Elise's home place. Throughout the early years of the marriage their family grew. The first children born were daughters: Myra born in 1960 and Cindy born in 1961. They were followed by a son, Neil, born in 1962, a third daughter, Tammy born in 1964, and a second son, Michael, born in 1970.

Throughout these years life was busy. Oliver continued working at Mid-West while farming part time with his dad. The farm consisted of dairy cattle, chickens, beef cattle, pigs and grain. It's amazing how they still found time to drive the kids to baseball and hockey and to be actively involved in the Church and community. In 1966 Oliver left Mid-West to farm full time while driving school bus part time for his brother, Alex. In 1980 Oliver purchased the school bus from Alex and continues to drive for Sturgeon School Division to this day. In 2006 Oliver will have driven bus for 40 years. He drives many students today who are children of previous passengers.

Throughout the years of raising a family Louise continued to be active in her community. She was always involved with the Mearns CWL and received her 40-year pin. Louise played and coached fastball for many years. Nearing the end of her fastball career Louise played on the same team as her three

daughters. She taught playschool in Mearns and later continued to teach in Busby. Louise always enjoyed working with young people and aided in organizing youth groups in Mearns.

As dedicated community members, Oliver and Louise participated in functions in Riviere Qui Barre, Alcomdale and Mearns. Oliver coached hockey in RQB and was a member of the Agricultural Society. Louise, of course, volunteered occasionally at Camilla School.

In the later years, Oliver and Louise continued to show their support for their grandchildren involved in sports and activities. In 1989 they travelled to Germany to see the Altmiks family farm. It was a vacation they treasured as they met many friends and family. In the early 1980's they started square dancing in Morinville with the Yellowrock dancers. They thoroughly enjoyed square dancing and made many wonderful friends. Oliver and Louise also joined the Mearns Senior Club and church choir, which Oliver continues to be a member of. Oliver is also an active member of the local Knights of Columbus.



Oliver and Louise Brenneis family. Back row L to R: Michael, Oliver. Front row: Myra, Cindy, Louise, Tammy, Neal

Unfortunately, on March 4, 2001 Louise lost her four-year battle with cancer. It was a huge loss for all of us. We will always cherish and treasure all of the memories she left behind.

In 2005 Oliver was recognized as a St. Charles Parish member celebrating 50 or more years in the community. Oliver continues to operate a grain and beef farm, drive school bus and reside on the family farm.

Brown, Craig & Tracy (Kluthe)

By Tracy Brown

I, Tracy, am the daughter of Lawrence and Simone Kluthe. I attended Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre and Sturgeon Composite High

School in Namao. I went off to the University of Alberta and graduated with my nursing degree in 1987. I worked for two years at the U of A Hospital and one year for the Edmonton Board of Health as a public health nurse. Dad always said, "Be a nurse, you can get a job anywhere". "Big deal. Why would that matter, as I'm never leaving Edmonton"! I bought a house in Edmonton in 1989. Within six months, I was selling the house and moving to the hamlet of Fort Vermilion in northern Alberta (no rational explanation – it must have been a 'man'). A town so small you had to cash your cheque early on Friday or the bank ran out of money. I married Craig Brown, forest officer, in Oct. 1991 – had to avoid winter logging, forest fire season, farm seeding and harvesting – that opens a big window for possible dates.



Craig and Tracy (Kluthe) Brown family taken in 2007. Back row L to R: Tracy and Craig. Front row: Jill, Evan, Amy

Government cutbacks in 1993 resulted in Craig's extremely early retirement and he was off to University for his Forestry degree. The cutbacks also meant no nursing jobs in Edmonton. The only way out of the Fort was maternity leave. Our son Evan arrived April 1, 1995. Despite three induction attempts, we had an April's Fool baby. Craig graduated in the spring of 1996 and asked how far north I was willing to relocate – a city boy he was not. He was offered the Senior Forester position for the Smoky River area in Valleyview. This temporary relocation for one to two years has become our permanent home base. Our daughter Jill arrived in December of 1996. The local public health nurse paid me a visit; "You are a RN – when can you start

work?" The lack of nursing jobs was a thing of history. I started working casual in April 1997. I went from casual to part-time to filling in as the Director of Nursing for vacation relief.

In June 1999, our daughter Amy arrived. Trying to work a few shifts and manage childcare for three children was becoming a nightmare. The hectic schedule and unreliable childcare pushed into a succession of three Filipino nannies, one related to the next, over the years. This was a good thing when I made the decision to take on the position of Director on a permanent basis as well. Then, a couple of years ago, I temporarily agreed to manage the Fox Creek Hospital and that arrangement became permanent as well with a new title Director of Health Services for Valleyview and Fox Creek.

We hope to be building a new house in town in the coming year and continue to enjoy Valleyview for a number of years to come. Evan loves hockey, soccer, baseball and video games – naturally. Jill and Amy have tried piano, skating, dance and the usual pursuits.

Bugnet, Maurice & Laurette

By Lucien & Evelyn Bugnet

Maurice & Laurette Bugnet were married on July 13, 1940 along with other couples in Edmonton who were lined up to be married so that the men would not have to go to war. Laurette borrowed a dress, hat and coat to be married in and they started their married life with \$2.00 in their pocket.

Maurice and Laurette lived in Legal until 1941 when they purchased land in Mearns from Dan and Bella Vandal, NE1/4 33 56 26 W4. Maurice farmed



Maurice and Laurette on their wedding day, July 13, 1940

until about 1964 and then rented the land to Robert Kieser. Maurice bought a school bus and drove from 1950 to 1974. He was also a baliff from 1953 to 1960. From 1957 to 1967 Maurice owned and operated an Esso Farm Trade Dealership.

Laurette belonged to the Mearns CWL for 35 years. Over the years Laurette fed, clothed and made many blankets for people in need whether they were family, friends or neighbors. She was a genuine person who understood the meaning of "feed and clothe my sheep". The Bugnet family was active in the St. Charles Parish and the Mearns community and has lasting memories of the Mearn's chicken suppers and picnics.

Maurice and Laurette had five children: Lucien, Yvonne, Robert, Marie-Rose (deceased at birth) and Denis.

Maurice and Laurette sold the farm to Richard Friedrich in 1976 at which time they moved to Morinville. Laurette was born in 1916 and died in November 1979.

In 1979, John and Yvonne Byer bought the acreage that had been subdivided from the Bugnet's quarter of land. There are a lot of good memories while living on the acreage, such as Northern lights, midnight wiener roasts, sledding, and children riding John's home-made go-cart. The acreage was sold in 1992 to Donna Matheos and sold again in 2003 to Jeff Bauer.

In 1995 Maurice sold the house in Morinville and moved to the Heritage Lodge. Maurice was born in 1918 and died February 2006.

Maurice's father was George C. J. Bugnet, a well-known French Canadian botanist, editor and writer born in France February 23, 1879. He and his wife Julia took up homesteading in Alberta in 1905. George Bugnet worked as editor of the Union paper in Edmonton. He also experimented with the hybridization of roses, at which he was very successful. He developed the Therese Bugnet rose, as well as several other hardy varieties for which he won recognition. His writings rank among some of the most important works in French published in Canada in the 1930's. After Gabrielle Roy, George Bugnet may be considered the major francophone writer of the Canadian West.

In 1954, George Bugnet and his wife Julia (Ley) celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with a mass celebrated by Fr. Gregory Rijniers at St. Charles Church in Mearns. Fifty or more friends and relatives gathered at the home of Maurice and Laurette Bugnet to enjoy the lovely banquet prepared by Laurette, Alma Sabourin and Alice Nobert. George passed away in St. Albert, January 11, 1981, just shy of his 102nd birthday.



Lucien and Evelyn Bugnet on their wedding day



100-year old Dr. Georges Bugnet, (writer and horticulturist), Finance Minister Jean Chretien and Leonard Nobert share a laugh in 1979



Maurice and Laurette Bugnet Family. L to R: Robert, Yvonne, Laurette, Maurice, Denis and Lucien



Maurice and Laurette Bugnet with their grandchildren

Byer, Lorenz & Marie

One of the first pioneers to homestead in the Mearns area was Lorenz Byer (1845-1933). He was born in Stuttgart, Germany and married Marie Brenhofer (1851-1940) also from Germany.



Nick and Maria Byer Family, 1939. Back row: Charlie, Lawrence, John, Joe, Tony. Middle row: Mary, Helen, Teresa, Rose. Seated: Nick and Maria

In 1887 they traveled by ship to Montreal then across land to Lethbridge and Calgary and finally moving north to the Mission in St. Albert. Their means of travel was ox cart. Crossing the North Saskatchewan River was no easy feat as there wasn't any bridge over the river.

They settled on a homestead two miles north and five miles west of Morinville on Township 56, Range 26, West of 4th Meridian.

They were blessed with three children: Morris (1878-1962), Nicholas (1884-1968) and Helen (1887-1976). The first log house was built in 1889 and the second in 1911.

Morris married Mary Byer (his cousin) from Stuttgart. They made their home in Alcomdale and raised five children.



The Nick & Maria Byer Family Reunion, 1992. Back row: Lawrence Brenneis, John Byer, Charlie Byer, Ambrose Brenneis, Lawrence Byer. Front row: Agnes Byer, Mary Stitsen, Olive Byer, Irene Byer, Evelyn Byer, Rose Brenneis, Stella Byer

Helen married Ferd Gore. They made their home on a farm near Nakamun. They adopted a wonderful daughter.

Nick married Maria Miller from Hungary. They lived on the Byer farm and had ten children.

Byer, Morris & Mary

By Susie Kluthe

Morris and Mary Byer homesteaded in the Alcomdale area, which is today occupied by their Grandson, Walter and Dolores DeRudder.

Morris was born in Hungary on January 20, 1878 and immigrated to Canada with his family in 1887 when he was nine years old. They landed on the east coast and took the train to Winnipeg. In 1888 the family arrived in Lethbridge, coming by Red River Cart and the Red Coat Trail. They were brought from Lethbridge to St. Albert by a young Father Lacombe. Morris' parents, Lorenz and Mary



Morris and Mary Byer with the three oldest children, Johanna, Nicholas and Morris Jr. – 1921

Byer, son Nick Byer and daughter Helen went to homestead in the Mearns- Alcomdale area on land later owned by Tony and Irene Byer, SW 14-56-25-W4th.

Morris stayed behind in St. Albert at the request of Father Lacombe to pursue his education. Morris Byer had many interesting stories to tell of those early days, among them, of the small shack he slept in where the snow blew in through the cracks onto his blankets. When he left the mission he was given a calf. This little heifer calf became the family's first milk cow.

He then worked clearing brush from the land that is Jasper Avenue in Edmonton today. In 1905 he was one of the first to homestead in the area that later became Alcomdale (Emile and Mary DeRudder took over the homestead). He also had a quarter section just outside of Morinville, by where the overpass is now built. He then went back to Hungary for a visit and brought back a wife, Mary Neudek. They married in Riviere Qui Barre April 20, 1914 and settled on the land they owned by Morinville. They had six children:

- John Byer, born February 13, 1915 and died February 9, 1916. To the best of Aunt Mary and Aunt Betty's recollection, he had pneumonia.
- Morris, born December 9, 1916 and died February



Wedding photo of Morris Byer and Mary Neudek, April 20, 1914

5, 1933 at the age of 16. He had been kicked in the face by a horse, which broke the roof of his mouth, and he died in the hospital about a week later.

- Nicholas Walter Byer, born January 4, 1918 and died July 11, 1974
- Johanna Margaret Byer, born January 5, 1919 and died January 11, 1983
- Elizabeth Mary Byer, born June 12, 1921
- Mary Helen Byer, born June 19, 1927 and died in March 2004.

The family moved back and forth farming the two homesteads and in 1928 moved permanently to the land by Alcomdale (NE 32-56-26-W4th) where the youngest daughter, Mary DeRudder (nee Byer), resided until her death on March 8, 2004.

Morris Byer served on the local school board and the St. Charles Church in this district when it was a log building beside where the present cemetery is today. Morris Byer and Dr. Alcombrack, for whom the hamlet was named, were responsible for getting the railroad to put in a siding for the new hamlet, which was being started on Dr. Alcombrack's farmland.

Many new settlers were put up overnight at the Byer home in the early days, picnics were held in their pasture and dances in their hayloft. The Byer home provided a boarding place for some of the first businessmen of Alcomdale, these included schoolteachers, the first banker and others.

The children all attended school in Alcomdale, then a one room school, one teacher for grades one to eight. Johanna and Elizabeth (Perras) played ball for Alcomdale. They would reminisce on how they all loaded in the back of a half-ton truck, traveled to Pibroch for a tournament and won the cup.

The four surviving children married and settled in Mearns, Alcomdale and Busby area.

Nicholas Walter Byer married Mary Elizabeth Elliott on July 2, 1943. They bought two quarters of land three miles east of Alcomdale and raised three children, William (Karen Jaeger) Byer, Evelyn (Lawrence Lirondelle) and John (married Yvonne Bugnet).

Johanna Margaret married Micheal Holzer on June 30, 1938. After working for farmers in the area they bought their own three quarters six miles east of Busby. They operated a mixed farm and had five children. Judy (Fred Zilinski), Robert (Simone Langevin), Dorothy (Frank St. Martin), Johanna (nicknamed Susie, William Kluthe) and Rose (Altmiks-Froese).

Elizabeth Mary Byer married Robert Perras on November 19, 1942. They lived on the farm with Robert's parents, Mr. & Mrs. Victor Perras, who also farmed in the Mearns area at the time, and then



Original Morris Byer Farmstead (NE-32-56-26-W4)



Morris and Mary Byer, 1961

in Morinville where they had three children, Lorraine, Leonard and Robert Jr.

Mary Helen Byer, the youngest child, married Emile DeRudder on August 8, 1950. Mary and Emile stayed on the original homestead of Morris Byer as they retired to Morinville. Emile farmed the land and did custom work for other farmers in the community. They were very active in the Mearns church community. They had three children: Walter (Dolores), Morris (Collette) and Mary Ann Helen. Walter is now the third generation residing on the homestead.

Byer, Nick & Maria

By the family

In 1914 Nicholas, son of Lorenz and Marie Byer, went to Hungary where he met Maria Miller. He was 30 and she was 22. Maria left her home in

Budapest, Hungary (never to return) to travel to Mearns, Alberta, Canada with Nick. While they were on the ship, World War I broke out and Maria was about to be sent back to Hungary. She was not a Canadian citizen and would not be allowed on Canadian soil. So Nick asked the ship's chaplain to marry them on the ship, August 15, 1914. She was then allowed to enter Canada.

They returned to the Byer family farm and in 1916 took over its operation. In 1920 Nick and Maria built the first "frame" house. There they raised ten children: Charles, Mary, Helen, Lawrence, John, Joseph, Anthony, Teresa, Rose and Elizabeth. Sadly, their youngest daughter Elizabeth was born August 15, 1928 and died in 1932.

They all attended the Tellier School three and a half miles away.

In 1914 they lived in a two room log house with Nick's father and mother, owned a quarter of land, two horses, two cows, two pigs and chickens, and made a living by selling eggs and milk to the local stores. By around 1936 they had four quarters of land, 14 milk cows, lots of pigs, chickens, turkeys, geese and 12 workhorses. They also owned a tractor and had purchased their first Ford car in 1928.

Sundays were for fun at church picnics with bingo, kids racing and receiving a sucker for a prize, and men playing horseshoes and baseball. Other Sundays, young people would come to the Byer home for homemade ice cream and a baseball game. They came with horse and buggy or bicycle: DeRudders, Telliers, Gibeaus and Mullers.



Nicholas and Maria Byer family photo taken in 1948. Back row L to R: John, Anthony, Charles, Rose, Teresa, Joseph, Lawrence; Front row L to R: Maria, Mary, Helen, Nicholas

Winters were long and cold. There was an occasional one-mile trip to a pond for skating. Otherwise evenings were spent indoors learning new card games. Theresa and Rose would run to sit on their dad's lap after supper. Nick would smoke his favorite pipe, as he and Maria would sing their favourite songs. Nick's favourite song was "Red Wing". Maria would often sing German songs.

From 1940 to 1945, during World War II, John and Lawrence served in the army overseas in Germany for Canada. Rose remembers how her mom could write German but not English so Rose was in charge of writing letters to her brothers. Because she was running out of ideas, she wrote them a few letters in "Pig Latin" (writing each word in reverse letters). The German army intercepted the letters and, thinking that they were a secret code, they kept Lawrence and John in confinement until the matter was cleared up. Rose also remembers that when Lawrence and John came home, their dad was upset with them because they drove the family tractor as if it was an army vehicle.

In 1951 Nick and Maria moved to Busby to live with John (still a bachelor). Tony took over the family farm. In 1954 they moved into their home in Morinville. On August 15, 1964, Nick and Maria celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary surrounded by their children, all married and with families of their own. Grandchildren numbered 47!

Grandma and Grandpa's house in Morinville became a fun place to be. Their huge back yard was great for games and the banister to the upstairs was a perfect slide. The grandchildren also fondly remember Grandma's magic cookie jar that would never run out of homemade cookies. They were shaped as rabbits, chickens, stars and an occasional gingerbread man covered in blue, pink, yellow or green "to-die-for" icing. In fact, everything tasted good at Grandma's house! Grandpa is still

remembered smoking his pipe and only gave it up when he couldn't hold it any longer.

In 1966-67 they moved into the Youville Nursing Home in St. Albert where they lived out their last years.

Children

Charles (1915-2000) married Agnes Cyre (1917) on August 2, 1938. They were farmers and lived one mile east and half a mile south of the home quarter for six years. In 1944-1951 they moved to LacLaNonne. Lived two years in Edmonton. In 1953 they moved to Perryvale, in 1979-1984 to Chilliwack, B.C. and in 1984 they retired in Westlock. They have 13 children: Roger (1939), Marjorie (1941), Carl (1943), Gilbert (1945), Donald and Ronald (1946), Philip (1951), Patricia (Janice) (1953), Robert and Elizabeth (Dec. 1953), Linda (1955), Michelle (1959) and Dwayne (1963).

Mary (January 1916-1995) married Charles Stitsen (1907-1982) on November 16, 1943. They were farmers and lived on a farm southwest of Busby. They retired to Westlock in 1982. They had five children: John (1945), Raymond (1946), Anthony (1948), Rose Mary (1950) and Elizabeth (1956).

Helen (December 1916-1986) married Melvin Caron (1915-1970) on October 27, 1936. They lived in Morinville from 1936 to 1940 where Melvin was an auto mechanic; Westlock in 1940-1943 when Melvin was called into the army; in Riviere Qui Barre in 1943 to 1961 where he farmed and was a mechanic, in Edmonton from 1961 to 1978 where Melvin was a mechanic and in Vancouver (Springfield) from 1978 to 1986 where they retired. They had six children: Ronnie (1937), Ernest (1939), Archie (1939), Lorraine (1942), Ferd (1950) and Wesley (1955)

Lawrence (1918-2000) married Stella Meunier (1927) on April 23, 1952. They were farmers. Lawrence was a tank driver in the army overseas from 1940 to 1945 and in 1948 they bought a farm near Busby. In 1975 they retired to Edmonton. They have one child, Laurier (1953).

John (1919-1994) married Olive Meunier (1929) on February 9, 1954. They were farmers. John was in the war overseas working on supply lines from 1940 to 1945. They bought a farm near Busby in 1950 and, in time, they retired in Edmonton. They have five children: Carmel (1954), Gordon (1956), Jan (1958), Glenn (1961) and Mary Lynn (1962).

Joseph (1922-1977) married Evelyn Brenneis (1928) on July 6, 1949. They were farmers. They bought a farm four miles south of Mearns and moved to St. Albert in 1975-76. They have six

children: Melvin (1950), Allan (1951), Gerald (1952), Ivan (1955), Mary Ann (1959) and Arlene (1963).

Anthony (1923-1982) married Irene Brenneis (1929) on October 24, 1949. They were farmers. Tony took over the family farm when they married and lived there all his life. Irene sold the farm in 1983-84 and moved to Morinville. They had no children.

Teresa (1925-1972) married Lawrence Brenneis (1920) on October 19, 1948. They were farmers. They bought a farm one mile south of Mearns. Teresa was a teacher at the Mearns school. She passed away in 1972 and in 1974 Lawrence sold the farm and moved into a house in Morinville. They had five children: Carol (1951), David (1952), Gloria (1954), Dianne (1955) and Gregory (1958).

Rose (1927-) married Ambrose Brenneis (1925) on July 6, 1949. They were farmers. They bought land about 3 miles south of Morinville then moved to a farm in Busby in 1970. They retired in Westlock in 1990. They have six children: Janice (1951), Kathleen (1953), Clifford (1954), Lois (1957), Kevin (1960) and Harold (1965).

Elizabeth (August 15, 1929-February 24, 1932) lived at home with her loving family for her short life.

Byer, Nick & Molly

By their children

On July 2, 1942 Nick and Molly were married in Westlock, Alberta. They started their life together on a farm three miles east of Alcomdale on a half section of land they purchased from Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Van Hove. Through the years they developed their farm to include a number of barns, chicken coops and eventually a new house and garage. Nick and Molly also acquired a quarter of land from his parents, Morris and Mary Byer.

Nick and Molly worked very hard breaking land and raising a variety of livestock, which included cattle, chickens, horses, hogs and geese. Until a thresher was purchased, Nick farmed the field with their horses, Barney and Freddy. Nick eventually purchased tractors from Mills Motors and then the rest of his farming equipment from local suppliers such as Spargo Bros, Falls Farm Equipment and Mills Motors. Despite meager beginnings, Nick was able to build a prosperous and healthy farm for his family.

Molly maintained a large garden, which provided an abundance of food for the Byer household. Molly would can everything including a variety of fruit, vegetables, meats and poultry. Molly



Wedding photo of Nicholas Byer and Mary (Molly) Elliott, July 2, 1942

was also an excellent seamstress and created hand embroidered and hem-stitched bed linens from hundred pound flour sacks. She made and cared for all of her children's clothing. Molly's role on the farm was not confined to homemaker; she was an excellent bookkeeper and helped manage the farm.

Nick and Molly had three children, Bill, Evelyn and John. All three attended school three miles east of the homestead in Alcomdale. In the summer months Nick would drive the kids to school in the morning and the children would have to walk home in the afternoon. In the winter Nick would drive the kids to and from school and on occasion he would use the horses if the roads were bad. Bill, Evelyn and John attended high school in Riviere Qui Barre.

Bill, the eldest son, married Karen Jaeger and they had three sons named John, Michael and Mark. Evelyn married Lawrence Lirondelle and they had two children named Lawrence (Gump) and Deanne. John married Yvonne Bugnet and they had two children, Michelle and Stacy.

When Nick was in his forties, he began having heart problems as a result of rheumatic fever



Family picture of Nick and Molly Byer Family. L to R: John, Evelyn and Bill; Nick & Molly Byer in front – circa 1962

developed in his childhood. Nick underwent open-heart surgery and was one of the first people to have a plastic valve. Despite any surgical success, Nick passed away on July 11, 1974. Molly sold the family farm and moved to Westlock where she still lives today.

The years on the farm were a wonderful experience. The Byer family worked together and enjoyed each other's company. Nick and Molly took great pride in providing for their family and teaching their children values and a strong work ethic.

Cameron, Archie & Florence

By son Evan Cameron – 2006

Richard Archibald Cameron, eldest son of Evan and Jeanette Cameron, married Florence Maude Mills of Independence in 1940. The William and Mabel Mills farmstead, where Florence was raised, was located two miles south of Independence and about one and a half miles west of the Evan Cameron farm, so courting was as easy as walking down the road.



Archie Cameron & Florence Mills wedding day November 5, 1940

Archie and Florence immediately built a home on their own land SW 30-56-26-W4, three quarter miles east of Evan's or two miles south and one half miles west of Alcomdale, where, over the next 30 years they raised nine

children: Evan, Elaine, Mabel, Douglas, twins Gail and Glen, twins Bruce and Stuart and Neil.

Initially farming with his father, upon Evan's retirement, Archie farmed both quarters, eventually acquiring ownership of Evan's quarter. Archie supplemented the farming operation with custom trucking work. Also, over the next 30 years he rented a number of neighbouring properties to further enhance his farming endeavours. One such venture entailed the leasing of government land on the Alexander Indian Reserve located three miles southwest of the home farm. This was largely raw land, which had been opened up to local farmers who were willing to clear and break the land for crops, with rent being established on a crop share basis. As the family grew, so did the farm, and in peak years Archie farmed as many as three quarters of Reserve land in addition to the land he otherwise owned or rented.



First Day of School, Sept. 1951. L to R: Doug (Gr. 1), Mabel (Gr. 2), Elaine (Gr. 3), Evan (Gr. 5). New house being built for the growing family, now up to 8 kids. It's hard to see, but there was actually a windcharger on top of the tower until around 1953

The 1950's saw a transition to much greater mechanization in farming, i.e. trucks, tractors, combines, etc. Horses were still used a lot in the early 50's, particularly at harvest time when grain was threshed with a threshing machine. Archie could handle horses but, unlike his father, wouldn't keep a team of his own around, preferring a tractor to a horse. He would call upon the neighbors when horses were needed, particularly the neighbor to the south, Eddie Brenneis, who always kept fine teams of horses on his farm. He and Archie threshed together for many years using Eddie's teams and others from the neighbourhood to pull the bundle wagons.

The threshing machine slowly gave way to the combine and the neighbour to the southwest, Alfons Friedrich acquired one of the first in the district. He took a few crops off the Cameron place with his self-propelled combine. By the end of the 50's, Archie, in partnership with another neighbor, Mr. George Sim, purchased their own self-propelled



'The Farmstead', Sept. 1949. First day of school for Elaine (Gr.1) and Evan (Gr.3)

combine and the threshing machine was permanently put out to pasture, where one such machine remains today.

The combine partnership with Mr. Sim remained in effect for over 25 years, with George and Archie establishing a lifelong friendship. Although they mostly farmed independent of each other, except at harvest time, they shared common interests, particularly a fondness for farm auction sales where it was rare to see one without the other.

In the 1970's Archie and Florence sold their half section farm to neighbors, except 45 acres in the southeast corner containing the farmyard, where they continued to live for the rest of their lives. They then purchased more land from the Lovelock estate, first a quarter two miles north NE 36-56-27-W4 and then later, what amounted to an additional two and a half quarters, five miles west and about three miles north, on the east side of the 5th meridian N½ NE - 5-57-27-W4, NW 5-57-27-W4 and NE 6-57-27-W4. This land was much better quality, but required a lot of clearing and breaking, which Archie loved to do.

Besides farming, Archie and Florence were very active in their community. Florence was an active member of the Independence Women's Institute (IWI) all her life. She was recognized for that with a memoriam entry into the District 2 WI Memorial Book (kept at the provincial archives), presented posthumously in 1992. The family members were faithful attendees of the Independence United Church, with Archie and Florence being active participants in the church affairs and activities until its closing around 1995.

One of Florence's legacies to the Independence community was the local history book called "Decades of the Independence District" which she compiled in the late 1970's and published in 1981 with funding from the IWI. She was instrumental in starting the Alcomdale Public Library and keeping it going for many years. Before that it was the Alcomdale Home and School Association, the Alcomdale Community League and of course involvement in the many extra-curricular activities of her children over the years.

Archie was involved in a number of organizations over the years too, including the Morinville Rural Mutual Telephone Association, Morinville Seed Cleaning Plant, Sturgeon Gas Co-op, the Alexander Indian Reserve Farm Board, the Reclamation Board, etc.

As parents, Archie and Florence encouraged and supported their children's participation in the local 4-H clubs, baseball teams, hockey teams, curling teams, Air Cadets at Bon Accord, Sunday School, church camps and various church youth groups. The children attended Alcomdale School through grade nine, then Camilla High School at Riviere Qui Barre – except the three youngest who attended Paul Kane High School in St. Albert with the closing of Camilla High School due to centralization.

As the children left home and started their own families, it became clear that other endeavours were more appealing to them than farming, so with their approaching retirement age in the 1980's, Archie and Florence started downsizing their farming operations. They sold one quarter and gradually dropped the leases on the reserve land. This gave Florence more time to spend on her beloved yard and flowers and Archie more time to go to his beloved farm auctions with George Sim.

During this period they did some traveling, one road trip in particular taking them out to Nova Scotia and down into the US mid-west to look up relatives they hadn't seen for years, if ever. There was a trip to visit relatives in Hawaii, and later, Florence (accompanied by daughter Elaine) made a special trip to Arizona to visit another relative. Another time, in the early 1980's, Florence was able to join some of her children and grandchildren on a trip throughout Europe and England, where she visited a lifelong pen pal whom she had never met. Of course, there was the constant stream of relatives and friends who dropped in at the farm to visit, catch up on the happenings of the neighbourhood and enjoy the meal Florence always had them stay to enjoy.

Finally by 1990 Archie and Florence had sold all their land, except the home place, and had a big auction sale in August of that year. That November they celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary with a large gathering of friends and relatives at the Alcomdale Community Hall. It was a memorable evening indeed.

As life goes they weren't able to enjoy a long retirement together as Florence passed away in February of 1991 at age 74 and Archie in August of 1994 at age 78; however, they left the Alcomdale community a better place. They are buried in the Cameron plot, next to Evan and Jeanette, at the Forest Hill Cemetery in Busby, Alberta.



Archie and Florence Cameron's 50th wedding anniversary celebration. Back row L to R: Neil, Stuart, Glen, Bruce and Douglas. Front row L to R: Elaine, Gail, Florence, Archie, Evan, and Mabel

To conclude, a brief note on each of the Cameron children and their whereabouts as of 2006, starting with the oldest:

Evan, an electrical engineer, married Nettie Luka, a schoolteacher, from Pibroch, Alberta in 1964. They live in the Namao district where they raised their three children, Sheila (Edmonton), Patricia (Calgary) and Christopher (Yellowknife, NWT).

Elaine, a geriatric care practitioner, married Ronald Eglen, an electrician from Edmonton in 1964. They live in Edmonton where they raised their three children, Rhonda (Edmonton), Carol (Shilo, Manitoba) and Darren (Edmonton). Ron passed away in March of 2006 at age 63.

Mabel, a high school teacher/college instructor, married Gordon Knight, a high school teacher from Edmonton in 1969. They live in Edmonton where they raised their two children, Brent (Austin, Texas) and Laurie (Wellington, New Zealand).

Douglas, a soil scientist and farmer, married Jacqueline Hirsch, a school teacher/librarian from Edmonton in 1969. They live on their farm near Swift Current, Saskatchewan where they raised their three children, Nicole (Calgary), Stephen (Regina) and Heather (Regina).

Gail, a schoolteacher, married Stanley Nordstrom, a dentist, from North Star, Alberta in 1969. They resided in Grande Prairie where they raised their two children, Karl (Calgary) and Amy (Edmonton). They recently retired to Edmonton.

Glen, a telecommunications manager, married Carol George, an office consultant, from Brandon, Manitoba in 1972. They lived in Calgary where they raised two children, Christina (Calgary) and Daniel (Calgary). Glen is remarried to Madeleine and they currently live in Doha, Qatar, where he instructs at a college.

Bruce, a land assessor, married Beverley Alstad, an office consultant, from Wembley, Alberta in 1975. They moved to a few places in Alberta and the NWT, but Stony Plain is where they mainly raised their four children, Carmen (Grande Prairie), Calvin (Edmonton), Gerald (Stony Plain) and Katherine (Camrose). They now live in Camrose, Alberta

Stuart, an RCMP officer, married Wilma Mandelkau, a geriatric care practitioner, from Gibsons, British Columbia in 1970. He served at a number of postings in BC and they raised two children along the way, Richard (Surrey, BC) and Scott (Langley, BC). Stuart recently retired and they live in Surrey, BC.

Neil, a land assessor, married Sharon Kay, an insurance consultant, from Berwyn, Alberta in 1972. They lived in a couple of places in Alberta, but Rocky Mountain House is where they mainly raised their two children, Shaun (Calgary) and Robin (Calgary). Neil passed away in December of 2001 at age 49.

By way of a footnote: As of 2006, the home place still remains in the family, having been purchased from the estate by son Bruce, who continues to manage it on a part-time basis, albeit on a greatly reduced scale.

Cameron, Evan & Jeanette

By grandson Evan Cameron, 2006, with credit to earlier versions by son, Archie and daughter, Christina

In 1908 Evan Cameron, then a young man of 31, left his home farm in Greens Brook, Pictou County, Nova Scotia with the "harvester special" which routinely brought Easterners out to help with the harvests in Western Canada. He visited his sister, Christie, who, having married Mr. Alex Cameron from Pictou County, Nova Scotia had already settled in Edmonton.

Compared to western farms, the Greens Brook, Nova Scotia farm was not too productive, being small, heavily wooded and stony. In 1911 he sold the farm to an uncle living nearby and he and his widowed mother came to Edmonton, initially living in a house next door to Alex and Christie Cameron, on what was known in those days as Fraser Avenue.

Mrs. Cameron became self sufficient almost from the time of her arrival. Her home became a boarding house for Nova Scotians, mostly young single female teachers coming from the east, as there was a great need for teachers, especially in rural areas of the new province of Alberta.

Meanwhile Evan Cameron became a teamster, hauling coal from the Old Dawson Mine.

In January of 1913 at age 35, he married

Jeanette Cameron, age 29, who had arrived in Edmonton from Nova Scotia in 1912 at the invitation of her brother, Richard (Dick), who had settled in Edmonton earlier. Her father was a fisherman and boat builder and they lived in a different part of Pictou County, on a farm at Three Brooks, near Pictou town. A daughter, Annie May, was born in 1914 but died an accidental death before she was two years of age. A son, Richard Archibald was born in 1916.

In the spring of 1917 Evan Cameron decided to go farming. He rented a farm north of the city on 142 Street, about three miles north of 137 Avenue, about midway between St. Albert and Namao, at Campbell Siding SW 12-54-25-W4, first stop on the then Edmonton Dunvegan British Columbia railroad (later the Northern Alberta Railway). This 175 acre farm was known as the O'Leary farm. Another son, Robert Evan, was born in 1918 but tragically died in 1929 at age 11 when he fell from a horse on the Campbell Siding farm. Daughters, Christina (1920) and Isabelle (1923), followed and all of the children attended Bellerose School located about a mile to the NE on SE 13-54-25-W4.

In 1936 the O'Leary farm they had rented for 20 years was sold and Evan and Jeanette Cameron and their three children; Archibald (Archie), age 20, Christina, age 16 and Isabelle, age 12, moved to the Alcomdale district, about 20 miles northwest (as the crow flies). It is now a tree farm.

Their initial move was to a farm they rented from a Mr. Luther Bacon about two miles west and three miles south of Alcomdale and the exodus from the O'Leary farm took place. Son, Archie, and helpers herded a hundred head of cattle about 16 miles north along Highway #2 and 10 miles west to the "Bacon" farm. Most of the household goods went via the NAR (in a boxcar) to Alcomdale.

After spending a year on the Bacon farm, the family moved to a farm nearby, owned by George Timney. Home was a temporary affair being little more than two granaries pulled together. It was hot in summer and cold in winter. Finally in 1938 the SE 25-56-27-W4, a raw quarter about a mile northeast, was purchased from the Nobert family and a permanent home was built, located two miles south and one and a half miles west of Alcomdale or about three miles west of Mearns. The quarter section was wooded and called for considerable brush cutting and clearing to be done, which was largely contracted out to the local native community and their families who camped on the property and worked or sometimes commuted to their nearby homes on the Alexander Reserve. The house was built by an acquaintance of Evan Cameron by the

name of Dan Campbell. In the fall of 1938 it was ready for occupancy.

By this time Archie was 22 and on the lookout for a farm of his own, eventually acquiring the quarter immediately east of Evan SW 30-56-26-W4 from a Mr. Winkelman. Daughter, Christina, was 18 and about to embark on a nursing career. Daughter, Isabelle, was 15 and still completing high school at Busby, commuting the seven miles on horseback every day. Prior to high school at Busby, schooling was at Belle Valley, about four miles to the southeast of their new home.

Archie married Florence Mills of Independence in 1940. They settled on the quarter east of Evan's where they took up farming and raised nine children – see **Archie and Florence Cameron** story.

Daughter, Christine, married Fred Dorward, an electrical engineer from Edmonton, where they raised six children: Linda, David, Ross, Janet (deceased), Evan and Scott.

Daughter, Isabelle, married Marshall Mills of Independence (brother to Florence Mills) and they established a cattle ranch in Pink Mountain, B.C. where they raised three children: Connie, Wayne and Marilyn. They recently retired to Fort St. John, B.C. and Wayne's family now runs the ranch.

The Cameron family was active in the district of Independence where Evan, blessed with a strong singing voice, participated in the Independence United Church choir for many years. He always had a great love for horses. He did a lot of horse-trading and was a regular at the racetrack in Edmonton. Evan and Archie farmed their two adjacent quarters together until Evan retired and Archie took over the farming, eventually acquiring both quarters. Evan's wife Jeanette loved gardening and houseplants. She also had a great talent for handwork, especially embroidery and crocheting. She was active in the Independence Woman's Institute for many years.

Evan and Jeanette Cameron remained on the farm until the mid 1950's at which time Evan's health began to fail. In 1956 they moved permanently to Edmonton where they lived with daughter Christina, although they spent most summers out on the farm. Evan Cameron passed away in May of 1959 at age 81. Jeanette continued to



Evan & Jeanette Cameron – circa 1953

spend summers on the farm until her passing 10 years later, in March of 1969 at age 85. They are buried in the Forest Hill Cemetery at Busby, Alberta.

Son Archie passed away in August of 1994 at age 78, predeceased by Florence who passed away in February of 1991 at age 74. Daughter Christina passed away in March of 2006, shortly before her 86th birthday and was predeceased by her husband Fred who passed away in June of 2000 at age 81. Daughter Isabelle and husband Marshall Mills recently retired to Fort St. John, B.C. The Mills Ranch at Pink Mountain, B.C. has now been passed on to the next generation.

Very little remains of the home place today. Archie sold the land in the 1970's and most of the buildings have since disappeared. The farmstead never did see electricity or natural gas. Heating was by wood or coal, water hand-pumped or drawn from a bored well and light came from naphtha or coal oil lamps. The house was located on one of the highest hills in the area and a lamp burning in the upstairs window was a welcome beacon for miles to the south. To this day the place along the road where the farmstead used to be is still known as Cameron's Hill.

Carnegie, Neil & Sandra (Brenneis)

By Neil & Sandra

Neil and Sandra live on an acreage near Alcomdale. We were married on October 11, 1980 in Riviere Qui Barre. Neil was from the Shoal Creek area and moved to Morinville in 1974. Neil's parents are Robert and Marie Carnegie.

Sandra lived at Egg Lake Coal Mine and later moved to Morinville. Her parents are Leo and Honnoreana Brenneis.

We have three children, Kandis, Cory and Amy.



Sandra (Brenneis) and Neil Carnegie family with daughters Amy, Cory and Kandis.

We bought our acreage in 1979 but didn't build on it until 1982. We moved into our house in January 1983.

When we bought our acreage it was all poplar trees. We cut some down when we built our house. Later we built our garage and cut the remainder of the trees down. I remember our parents thought we were crazy, along with our neighbours. We had no shelter left and we were so close to the highway. We replanted spruce trees, willows and maples and now we have a nice wind shelter.

Neil works for ATCO Midstream and has received an award for 25 years service. Sandra works at Pro-Ex Canada.

We are also members of the Busby Lions Club.

We love this area and are proud to be part of this community.

Case, Don & Faith

By Don & Faith

Don and Faith met in Edmonton, Alberta in August of 1977. They were married in April of 1979. Don's parents, Allan and Marlene Case purchased John Buyer's home quarter farm in 1978 north of the Independence Hall. In the spring of 1982, Don and Faith moved out to the farm with their daughter Katherine (born in December of 1980). Don and Faith moved into the large farmhouse. Don built another house on the farm for his parents.

Don worked on and off the farm as a carpenter, but also helped his father with the cattle business. Faith put her nursing career on hold to be at home to raise children. Over the next three years, Don and Faith had two more children, Elizabeth (born in 1982) and Lucas (born in 1985).

Don started a business building cabinets and furniture at home. As the years went on, Don's family got older and they became involved in school activities (music, sports, and fundraising activities), 4-H (raising and showing cattle projects, working in the community) and attending St. Anthony Parish in Busby. When St. Anthony Parish closed down, Don and Faith decided to attend St. Charles in Mearns.

Once the children were old enough, Faith went back into the work force, with schooling, received her accreditation as an LPN. Over the years that followed, Faith worked as a nurse in many of the extended care and assisted living facilities in the surrounding communities. Don went back to working off the farm as a supervisor in the construction industry.

Faith volunteers by playing her music in many of these facilities. Don is active with the Knights of

Columbus. Even though their children have grown and moved on into their own lives, Don and Faith remain active in their church and community.

Cloutier Family

By Lucie Roy

The family history of Jeanne Roy is interesting in that, the first generations, the Cloutier's (her father's side) and her mother (the Cote's) made possible contact prior to and after they arrived in Canada, then known as New France. Her father's side of the family, Cloutier's, are well documented in several books as first pioneer settlers in Quebec, working in association with Samuel de Champlain, and as equally well documented is her mother's family – Cote, of which one became a Senator in Alberta, one ran a coal mine in Cardiff and one owned numerous stores in Morinville, as well a small town in Northern Alberta was named after Jean Cote.



Jeanne Cloutier and Ernest Roy on their wedding day, Nov. 20, 1952 at Jean-Côté, Alberta

Jeanne said when her mother lived in Jean-Cote (her mother was 10th generation) she always wondered why someone would name a town by that name, never knowing that it was named after first generation ancestors. It was in this 10th generation a Cote married a Cloutier.

Jeanne Marie Irene Roy (nee Cloutier) was born June 17, 1931 in Mearns, Alberta. She is the ninth child of twelve children of Ephraim and Emma Cloutier (nee Cote). Her father was a farmer who came from St. Albert, Ontario. When Jeanne was about five years old, the family moved to Plamondon, Alberta and a year and a half later they moved to the Lac La Biche Mission, a short distance from the town of Lac La Biche. She started school at the convent there, at the age of seven. She lived at the Lac La Biche Mission until she was 19 years of age, at which time she came to work at the Youville Home in St. Albert. She worked there for nearly three years. It was while she was at the Youville Home that she met Mary Denaka and they became fast friends.

Jeanne and Mary decided to go to work in the hospital in High Prairie, Alberta so they boarded the train and debarked at High Prairie. However, they worked only six months at the hospital. It was during this time that Jeanne met the man who would eventually become her husband. On November 20, 1952



Jeanne Roy, St. Albert, Alberta – 2007

Jeanne married Ernest Joseph Rosaire Roy in Jean-Cote, Alberta. Ernest Roy is the son of Francois and Amanda Roy (nee Trahan), and is the youngest of eleven children. He was born July 26, 1924 in Windsor, Richmond, Quebec. The family of Francois Roy and wife Amanda came from Quebec in August 1930, and settled in Jean-Cote, where they became farmers, and eventually so did Ernest. The family of Ernest and Jeanne Roy lived in Jean-Cote for twenty-three years. In 1976 the family moved to Peace River, Alberta, and Ernest and Jeanne both worked in the Provincial Building and Court House in Peace River. During her time there Jeanne also worked in a number of other places such as the restaurant, hotel, motel, school and nursing home. When they were both working in the Provincial Building, Jeanne and Ernest had overlapping shifts and saw each other infrequently, usually on the weekends.

Jeanne and Ernest loved fishing, including ice fishing and camping in their camper. Jeanne enjoyed many hours of sewing and Ernest's hobby was woodworking and among other things, he built furniture. Jeanne has some of the furniture in her room at the Chateau Mission Court where she

moved to in March 2002 and where she still resides today. In 1995, Jeanne and Ernest had moved to Barrhead, Alberta, where on August 10, 1999, Ernest passed away in an accident, after suffering a heart attack, while they were out for a drive. Ernest was cremated and his ashes are buried in Jean-Cote, in the family plot, along side his parents.

They have seven children, named Gilberte, Lucie, Ronald, Lise, Albert, Joanne, and Sylvia. They have ten grandchildren, Ernie, Joel and Cory Overeem (Joanne & Casey), Julie and Ronda Aschim (Gilberte and Roy Aschim, she is now married to Warren Pubanz), and Dion, Darcy and Connie Roy (Ronald & Brenda Roy), and Clinton and Jay Witter (Lise & Cliff Witter, she is now married to Rick Stewart), and two great grandchildren, Sebastian Ronald Roy, son of Dion and Sherri Roy, and Alexa, daughter of Darcy Roy. Jeanne presently resides in St. Albert and the brothers and sisters presently all reside in the province of Alberta.

Cloutier Beginnings:

The name Denis Cloutier is as far back as records show. He was born in 1565 in St. Jean, Perche, France. He died March 2, 1632 or 1633 at St. Jean, Perche, France. He was married twice. In his second marriage, Denis's wife was Jeanne Gaultier. They married November 3, 1608. We are related to the first marriage. He first married at Mortagne-au-Perche, France to Renee Briere. She was born in 1570 at Mortagne-au-Perche, France and died May 1, 1608 in St. Jean, Perche, France. They have nine children, Zacharie, (our lineage follows his son Jean), Michel, Renee, Nicholas, Louis, Catherine, Jacques, Claude, and Loyse. Records are not clear as to the order of birth for the first six children. The records begin in 1600. These records are from the first registry of Saint-Jean-de-Mortagne-au-Perche, Department l'Orne, France.

1st Generation- Zacharie Cloutier

In the first generation, Zacharie was born in December 1590 in Saint-Jean Baptiste-de-Mortagne, France. He married Xainte Dupont on July 18, 1616 in Saint-Jean-de Mortagne-au-Perche, l'Orne, France. Xainte Dupont was born in 1596 and was the widow of Michel Lermusier, and she was from la paroisse de Feings, France. They relocated to what is now Canada in April 1634. With the encouragement of Sir Robert Giffard, Zacharie Cloutier decided to leave Perche, France for Canada. On March 14, 1634, by contract approved by notary Mathurin Roussel of Mortagne, France, Zacharie agreed to come work for Sir Giffard at the lordship of Beauport, Quebec for five years. The contract with Sir Giffard stipulated a payment of

1,000 acres of land once the contract was terminated. Plus, Sir Giffard also added that Zacharie was to build them a house.

In the book "Portraits de familles pionnieres" Robert Prevost devotes a chapter to Zacharie Cloutier. It mentions that Robert Giffard, Mathurin Roussel, Zacharie Cloutier and Jean Guyon prepared to go work in Canada, and that in Quebec this group of four were part of the Cent-Associés that were hand picked by Samuel de Champlain, at the beginning of June. In April 1634, Zacharie Cloutier, his wife Xainte, and their children, Zachaire Jr., Jean, Charles, Anne, and Louise left Mortagne, France for Dieppe, France and boarded a ship which would bring them to New France, (Quebec, Canada) June 4, 1634. After three years of clearing land belonging to Sir Giffard, the terms of the contract agreed to at Mortagne, France were complete, and Zacharie was given the 1,000 acres as promised, on February 3, 1637 as witnessed by Notary De Lespinasse. This land was jointly acquired between Zacharie Cloutier and Jean Guyon and they proceeded to divide it on December 10, 1637. At the bottom of this document appears a peculiar mark of Zacharie's, used for his signature, a carpenter's axe.

Zacharie was free to work as a master-carpenter for the Lords. He took on well-paying contracts and was making a secure living. On December 10, 1670, Zacharie and Xainte sold their business, "La Clousterie" to Nicholas Dupont from Neuville, as witnessed by Notary Gilles Rageot. After the sale of their business, the couple retired on their homestead at Chateau-Richer, Quebec with their son, Zacharie Jr. This home is called "Maison Cloutier" and has been in the Cloutier family through several generations. It has since been remodeled into a restaurant named "La Fine Gueule."

Zacharie Cloutier is listed on the "First Settlers in Quebec" plaque on Monument Hebert at City Hall in Quebec City.

They had six children, five of whom would accompany them to New France (Quebec, Canada). Their children, Zacharie Jr., Jean, Charles, Anne and Louise are the 2nd generation. Jean was born 1621 and married Marie Martin January 21, 1648. They had 14 children. Our lineage follows his son Pierre, 3rd generation. Pierre was born April 16, 1667 in Quebec and married Jeanne Verreau on Feb. 27, 1696 at La Visitation Notre Dame, Chateau-Richer, Montmorency, Quebec. She is the daughter of Barthelemi Verreau and Marthe Quitel. Among their two children, who are 4th generation, is Pierre II. Pierre Cloutier (II) was born June 4, 1698 in Quebec and married Marie Lacroix on October 4,

1722 at St. Joachim, Montmorency, Quebec. Among their children is Pierre III. Pierre (III), 5th generation, married Monique Marie-Josephte Poulin on February 7, 1752 at St. Joachim, Montmorency, Quebec. Among their children is Pierre Paul Cloutier. Pierre Paul Cloutier, 6th generation, married Francoise Drouin on June 10, 1778 at Ste-Anne-de-Beaupre, Montmorency, Quebec. Among their children is Pierre Cloutier. Pierre Cloutier, 7th generation, was married twice. The first marriage was to Agnes Poulin on April 10, 1809, and the 2nd to Marie Pare on July 24, 1824. Both weddings took place in Quebec. Among their children is Etienne Cloutier, 8th generation. Etienne was born between 1824 and 1835, date unknown. He married Judith Gamache on February 13, 1849 in St-Cyprien, Napierville, Quebec. They had fourteen children. Joseph, their 8th child was born February 4, 1864.



Joseph Cloutier with his children Maria, Cyrille and Ephraim (seated)

9th Generation – Joseph Cloutier- Heading West

Joseph Cloutier married Eglantine Charlebois, daughter of Eustache and Adeline Charlebois (nee Filion) on July 11, 1887 at St-Luke, Curran, Prescott, Ontario. Their four children are Ephraim, Cyrille, Alexis, and Maria. They lived in St. Albert, Ontario. Eglantine passed away on July 28, 1897 in St. Albert, Ontario. At the time of their mother's

death, Ephraim was eight years old, Cyrille was six years old, Alexis was four years old and Maria was three months old. Joseph married Angelina Lafrance between 1897-1906.

In 1906, Joseph, his second wife Angelina and three children, Ephraim at 17, Cyrille at 15 and Maria at 9 years old, (Alexis was adopted and stayed in Ontario and went on to work for the Federal Government in the Department of lands and Forests) ventured west from St. Albert, Ontario to the Province of Alberta. Joseph bought a farm south of Morinville in the Volmer area. Later on, there were openings for homesteads between Picardville and Westlock, Alberta. His boys were growing older and he saw the need to move in this direction. He bought a homestead for himself, his wife took one homestead in her name for their daughter Maria, who was too young to make this purchase, and their two sons each bought a homestead. In about 1915, they moved to the Picardville area. By 1925, they sold their land in Picardville and moved to the town of Morinville. His second wife, Angelina, died April 8, 1929 and is buried in Morinville, Alberta.

Joseph stayed in Picardville for about five to six more years. By this time, his boys had sold their homesteads in Picardville and went to Mearns, Alberta. Ephraim and his family lived on the south west side and Cyrille and his family on the east side. Joseph went to live near his boys and their families and built himself a house closer to Ephraim. Joseph kept a few horses. His grandson, Leo, (Jeanne's older brother), remembers helping his grandpere Cloutier with some chores.

In 1934, during the depression years, Joseph decided to move with Ephraim and his family to Plamondon, Alberta. They stayed in Plamondon about four years. At 70 years of age, Joseph began receiving his pension. He lived with Ephraim's family for a short time in Plamondon and then he rented a small house in the town of Lac La Biche, Alberta.

In 1937, Joseph bought five acres with a T-shaped house along the lakeshore about half a mile west of the Lac La Biche Mission. Eventually he went back to Morinville to live with his daughter Maria for some time. In his final years, he lived in the Youville Home in St. Albert. He died in June 1952 and is buried at the Lac La Biche Mission. In September of 1957, his great-granddaughter Simone was buried along side his grave.

Jeanne's parents – 10th Generation - Ephraim and Emma Cloutier (nee Cote)

Ephraim was born July 15, 1889 in St. Albert, Ontario. In 1911 near Picardville, Ephraim took up a homestead. He lived there as a bachelor until he

married Emma Cote on November 24, 1915. Emma is the fifth child of seven children of Ferdinand and Adeline Cote (nee Huot). She was born August 1, 1892 in St. Francis County of Brompton, Quebec.

After having been married a few years, Ephraim and Emma started their family. The four older ones were born in Picardville, Alberta. They are Leo, Alice, Ida and Joseph.

In 1926 they moved to Mearns, Alberta. They had six children who were born in Mearns. They are Therese, Emile, George, Andre, Jeanne and Louis.

During the depression years the family moved on to the Plamondon area and arrived there April 28, 1934. Ephraim's father, Joseph, also came with them. The last two children were born in Plamondon. They are named Paul and Henri. After four years in Plamondon, they decided to take up farming at the Lac La Biche Mission. Ephraim and his wife Emma bought two river lots at the Lac La Biche Mission. They left Plamondon on New Year's Eve, 1938. In November 1941, Ephraim and his family moved into their new house. Besides farming, Ephraim did carpentry work. Emma helped around the parish every summer and also enjoyed singing in the church choir for quite a few years.

Emma and Ephraim moved to the Youville Home in St. Albert until their passing, Emma on May 23, 1968 and Ephraim on September 7, 1968. They were laid to rest in the St. Albert Mission Cemetery.

Jeanne's Mother – Ancestral Lineage Cote Family: 1st Generation – Jean Cote & Anne Martin, married November 17, 1635, Quebec City; 2nd Generation – Jean Cote & Anne Couture, married Sept. 11, 1669, Quebec City; 3rd Generation – Noel Cote & Madeleine Drouin, married Feb. 28, 1696, Ste. Famille, P.Q.; 4th Generation – Pierre Cote & Dorothee Marcel, married April 9, 1720, St. Francois, Ile d'Orleans, near Quebec City; 5th Generation – Jean-Baptiste Cote & Marie-Marthe Ruel, married November 6, 1747, St. Laurent, Ile d'Orleans, near Quebec City; 6th Generation – Jean-Baptiste Cote & Marie Therese Boucher, married Oct. 10, 1774, St. Antoine de Tilly, P.Q.; 7th Generation – Basile Cote & Marie Drapeau (second marriage), married Nov. 9, 1824, St. Nicolas, P.Q.; 8th Generation – Basile Cote & Desanges Cote – married February 23, 1846, St. Antoine de Tilly, P.Q.; 9th Generation – Ferdinand Cote & Adeline Huot, married Nov. 11, 1878, St. Agapit, P.Q.; 10th Generation – Emma Cote & Ephraim Cloutier, married Nov. 24, 1915, Morinville, Alberta; 11th Generation – Jeanne Cloutier & Ernest Joseph Rosaire Roy, married Nov. 20, 1952, in Jean-Cote, Alberta.

The population in New France in 1627 was 107

people, in 1640 there were 270 people, in 1645 there were 300 people. Except for the explorers, missionaries and interpreters, they were all living along the shores of the St. Lawrence River from Cap Tourmante to Montreal. The first Jean Cote to land in Canada married Anne Martin November 17, 1635. She may have been a co-passenger on the sailing ship, which brought them to Quebec.

It has always been assumed that the first generation Jean Cote came from Perche province in France, as did many of the other settlers in Beauport.

It was not until February 5, 1645 that the land in Beauport was officially ceded to Jean by the Seigneur Robert Giffard, before this it had been a verbal agreement. This would have been the same time Zacharie Cloutier and family were also in the area.

The first concession granted to Jean Cote (and Anne Martin) was done so by Samuel de Champlain's successor, the governor Sieur Charles Huault De Montmagny on August 27, 1636. Champlain founded Quebec in 1608 and died there December 25, 1635.

When Jean Cote died on March 27, 1661 he was buried in the crypt under Notre Dame de Quebec Basilica. It was a very great privilege to be interred in the parish church. The first burial was in 1654 and when Jean died he was the tenth person to have been given this honor.

Why did they leave France? The existence of one man, Robert Giffard, born in Autheuil in 1589 and a pharmacist (who had lived five or six years in Canada before returning in 1627) is in large part the reason for this response. The first voyage in 1634 of many settlers with their families involved largely a vote of confidence in their leader and his abilities. A certain taste for adventure, the desire to be one's own master and live more freely was certainly something to consider.

Cloutier, Cyrille & Rose Anna

By Elaine Worthman

Cyrille Cloutier was born on October 14, 1891 in St. Albert, Ontario. He was the son of Joseph and Eglantine Cloutier (nee Charlebois) who were farmers. He and his two brothers and sister came to St. Albert, Alberta with their parents in 1906. Cyrille established a farm at Pickardville in 1911.

Rose Anna Cote was born on November 26, 1895 in St. Francois, County Brompton, Quebec, the daughter of Ferdinand and Adeline Côté (nee Huot). Her father was a carpenter and she was one of a family of seven. She had six sisters and one



Cyrille and Rose Anna Cloutier – Wedding photo – 1914

brother. They moved to Massachusetts in 1895 and then to Morinville, Alberta in 1909.

Cyrille Cloutier and Rose Anna Côté were married on April 14, 1914 in St. Jean Baptiste Church in Morinville.

In 1920, Cyrille and Rose Anna moved to a farm northwest of Morinville in the Mearns area where they raised their family of fourteen children; Paul, Jeanne, Louise, Lucienne, Alma, Gertrude, Henri, Fernand, Germaine, Hector, Rita, Irene and Raymond. Another son, Philippe, died at the age of 20 years old. Philippe was burned in an accident at Egg Lake Coal Mine and is buried in the Mearns Cemetery.

Cyrille served as a Church Trustee for 32 years and as a School Trustee for 30 years. He always had a keen interest in politics and was a census taker for 20 years. Rose Anna loved gardening and was an expert at growing flowers from which she derived much pride and satisfaction. Rose Anna was also a member of the church choir.

The Cloutier household was always a very busy one as one would imagine with 14 children but this home also opened its doors to the resident school teacher as well as to Pepere and Memere Cloutier.

The children grew up and married.
 Paul married Octavia Richard
 Jeanne married Victor Douziech
 Louise married Alberic Laforce
 Lucienne married Jean-Baptist Mahé, then married Bernard Lamoureux
 Alma married Arthur Laforce
 Gertrude married Alfred Roy
 Henri married Laurance Laforce
 Fernand married Mariette Routhier
 Germaine married Lionel Roy, then married Lloyd Crumback
 Hector married Therese Roy
 Rita married Frank Salé
 Irene married Roland Caouette
 Raymond married Judith LaCoursiere

In 1959 Cyrille and Rose Anna sold their farm and purchased a home in St. Albert, Alberta where they retired.

The couple celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary in 1964 and 10 years later celebrated their 60th Wedding Anniversary.

In 1973 they moved to the Youville Home in St. Albert where Cyrille passed away at the age of 86 in 1977 and Rose Anna passed away July 21, 1983 at the age of 90.



Paul and wife Tavia with children Emile, Richard and Marie on Boxing Day. A very cold day, stayed overnight on Christmas – circa early 1930's.



60th Wedding Anniversary – Cloutier Family Photo – Back row L to R: Hector, Fernand, Paul, Raymond, and Henri. Middle row: Irene, Alma, Lucienne, Rita, Louise, Jeanne, Gertrude, and Germaine. Front row: Rose Anna and Cyrille



Youngest of the family – Germaine, Rita, Irene, Raymond and friend – circa 1941

Cloutier, Henry & Laurance (LaForce)

By daughter, Elaine Worthman

On June 13, 1926 Laurance Julie LaForce was born at home in Legal, Alberta to Napoleon and Julie LaForce. Laurance was one of 10 children and grew up in Legal and there met her future husband.

Henry Robert Cloutier was born to Cyril and Roseanna Cloutier on March 13, 1925 in Mearns and was one of 14 children.

Henry and Laura began dating in 1944. Keeping a relationship wasn't easy. The only means of communication they had, was an occasional letter while Henry was away working a lumber camp and



Henry and Laurance Cloutier on their wedding day June 18, 1946

would be away all winter. They dated for about two years before they were married on June 18, 1946 in Legal. They resided in a rented farmhouse at Horicks' dairy where Henry worked.

After one year of marriage, Albert was born in 1947, the first of eight children to be born to Henry and Laura. In 1949 Donald (Don) was born and Henry and Laura left the dairy and bought their farm.

Henry had to clear the land and build a house so, during this time, Laura had to move back to her parents' home with Don and Albert. During the summer, Henry would farm and during the winter, he would work at the Starkey mine.

They mostly farmed cattle but also had other animals such as chickens, which they would sell at the market. Henry and Laura continued to live at the farm, having many more children. Laurette was born in 1951 and Annette in 1952. Maurice was born in 1957, Robert in 1960 and Dennis in 1965.

After 16 years on the farm, they had enough of the struggles farm life had to offer and decided to move to St. Albert. With only two houses to choose from, they bought the one on Mural Crescent where last, but not least, Elaine was born in 1968. They now had eight wonderful kids!

Henry got his first job at Silverwoods Dairy in Edmonton and worked there for three years before getting a job with the City of St. Albert and then worked for Safeway until he retired at the age of 65.

Laura stayed home and raised the kids as well as taking in foster kids until 1974 when she started working at the Youville Home and retired in 1988 at the age of 62.

The house in St. Albert was crowded – two to a bedroom, take it or leave it – until the kids started to leave one by one and get married.

- Don married Brenda Yoemans on July 4, 1970 and they had two children, Jason and Joelle. Sadly, Joelle passed away in her teens.



Henry and Laurance Cloutier with their first six children. Two more followed

- Albert married Jeanne Magnan on February 27, 1971 and they have four children, Jocelyne, Danny, Louise & Raymond.
- Laurette married Peter Shulba on August 18, 1973 and they have two girls, Sheri and Lorraine.
- Annette married Henri Hebert on July 30, 1976 and they have two kids, Wes and Stacy.
- Maurice married Elaine Sevingy on August 6, 1988 and they have two girls, Kimberley and Shannon.
- Dennis married Kerry Dean on August 5, 1989 and they live in Vancouver.
- Elaine married Riko Worthmann on June 9, 1990 and they have two kids, Alesha and Cooper.
- Robert married Susan Canelon on July 8, 1995 and they have two sons, Joshua and Ryan.

Ryan is the youngest of 16 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren, Jamie, Christian and Sophia.

Henry and Laura enjoyed their house in St. Albert for 32 years before deciding to move into a condo on St. Michael Street. In the summer of 2007, with Henry's health failing, they decided to move into West Country Hearth in Villeneuve, where they are currently living.



Henry and Laurance Cloutier on the occasion of their 60th wedding anniversary, June 18, 2006

Cochlin, Doyle & Ida (Turgeon)

By daughter, Margo (Margaret) Forest

Dad was employed by United Grain Growers Limited and transferred to Mearns in 1932. He states he had difficulty finding Mearns, as it did not appear on any map. Apparently there were few houses, a store and post-office, two grain elevators and the Catholic Church.

July 4th, 1933 Dad married Ida (Turgeon) in Morinville. Father Pilon was hesitant in marrying them due to the fact that Dad was Irish and didn't speak French, so it was questionable if he was Catholic. Father Stacey of Mearns intervened and



Ida, Margo and Doyle Cochlin, 1934

with the assistance of the Bishop, they were married.

Dad was very involved with the Mearns baseball team and consequently entertained many summer evenings and weekends. Apparently Dad held a record for hitting "foul balls".

May 20th, 1934, I was born, their only child. My playmates were cousins, Angeline and Roger Nobert.

Mom used to drive all of the school age children of Mearns back and forth to school in Alcomdale, the girls in the front seat and the boys in the rumble



"Playmates" – photo taken by garage at Mearns Store. Roger Nobert, Angeline Nobert, Margo Cochlin

seat. Wintertime, when the roads were impassible, we went with the Ricard's horse and caboose.

I remember Dad and Uncle Emile Nobert having large wooden kegs on the front deck of the store. In the summer, they would put water in them, shake them daily and let the hot sun steam the kegs. I later learned that this is how "SWISH" was made.

I also remember the people of Mearns all had a dear friend named "BIG JOHN", known as a carpenter and custodian of the church.

I was married to Leonard Forest April 22nd, 1957 and from this union provided them with three grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Dad and mother celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in Morinville, July of 1983.

Dad was born in Granum, January 17th, 1911, passed away October 16th, 1989.

Mother was born May 8th, 1910 in Morinville, passed away December 6th, 1995.



Doyle and Ida Cochlin's 50th Wedding Anniversary at St. Jean Baptiste Church, Morinville – Len Forest, Ida Cochlin, Doyle Cochlin and Margo Forest – July 1983



Ida and Doyle Cochlin

Collins, Michael & Martha (Timney)

Information taken from "Decades of the Independence District" (1981)

Michael Stevens Collins, often referred to as M.S. by his relatives, was born in Missouri, U.S.A. He grew up there and married, farming with his wife and four children in Hastings, Nebraska. The children were three boys and a girl. The girl died in the early years and Michael's wife died in 1899.

In 1902 Michael Collins came to the Northwest Territories on a land settlement train. Each passenger paid \$60.00 to come to look at land here. Michael had given each of the boys a quarter of land to farm and rented them his own farm as well before leaving the United States.

When Mr. Collins arrived in Edmonton he was taken throughout the country by a real estate agent. One of these trips, or possibly more than one, took them through the Riviere Qui Barre area, stopping at the Timneys farm for meals. Another place they stopped at was the Jerry Smith farm. Some of the owners of that farm since have been Billy Young, Karl Aust, Dan and Olga Trelenberg and presently Duane Dyer. Michael stayed with the Jerry Smith family for a while. He bought two quarters of C.P.R. land situated a mile and a half north of the present Martin Farms corner or in earlier years it was the Ellett Brothers. The land location was E½ 9-57-27-W4. He immediately cleared a building site. His first introduction to the Timney family was for the best, because before long Michael married Martha Timney.

Michael Collins gave land to have a school and a church built, an acre for each, and to keep as long as needed for the purposes. Logs were cut on a neighbour's farm and some lumber sawed. The sawmill was likely owned by Pete Graph. In 1903, with all volunteer labour, these two buildings became a reality. The school was a log structure and the church was a frame building. The name chosen was Independence. Recollections have it that credit is to be given to Mrs. Jerry Smith for the name as they were from Independence, Missouri. The school opened in September of 1903, with Miss Kate Timney as the first teacher, a sister to Martha Collins. Kate boarded with Michael and Martha.

On March 4, 1904, Willis Timney Collins was born in a sleigh in twenty below zero weather, enroute to the Timney farm at Riviere Qui Barre. The location was then on the Indian Reserve, east of the Dunhams. Mrs. J. Dunham acted as a district nurse throughout the area, so Mrs. Collins and baby Willis were able to stay in the Dunham home for ten days before going to Grandma Timneys for a while.

In 1906, Michael, Martha and Willis Collins moved to Hastings, Nebraska due to illness of a son of Michael's. They returned to Alberta in 1916. Much to Mr. Collins chagrin, he found upon his return that the Independence Church had been moved, relocated a mile and a half south. He then said that his church had been stolen and that the cemetery should go as well. There were three graves in the little cemetery at the time, one being of a little eight-year old Woods girl. The main reason that the church had been moved was the proximity of the main congregation. To most, the church now became more central. M.S. withdrew his support and gave it to the Busby Church.

Martha Collins died suddenly of a heart attack on April 23, 1923. She was attending a Women's Institute meeting at the home of Mrs. Thomas Lovelock. It might be of note here that the roads were in the throes of a spring breakup and the neighbors found this very convenient to attend the W.I. meeting and pick up the groceries at the same time. Another note: Dewey Spargo was teaching at Independence at the time of Mrs. Collins death and was boarding with the Collins family.

Willis married Rosalie Forsyth of Camrose on June 26, 1928. A wedding dance was held in the Independence Hall on June 29th. Dewey and Bert Spargo and Evelyn McMillan (nee Weidrick) were in the orchestra that played for the dance. Willis and Rosalie carried on with farming and born to them over the years were, Lola, Audrey, Vivian and Doyle.

Michael passed away in 1931 and had enjoyed fairly good health over his life span.

In 1938 Willis moved his family to Alcomdale. Here he ran a blacksmith shop, garage and filling station. Willis was also a lineman for the Mutual Telephone Company.

This family was always community minded. They always attended Independence Church and the children were in the Sunday school. Rosalie was a long time member of the Independence Women's Institute. While in Alcomdale, Rosalie served a term as secretary of the Mutual Telephone Company. Some of the board members were: James Mitchell as President, Stan Whitson, Tim Harrington, Alex Morrison and Walter Ellett.

The Collins children started school in Independence School and continued in the Alcomdale School. In 1945, the family moved again, this time to Edmonton.

Lola married Mr. Gavel and they lived in Sicamous, British Columbia. They had three sons.

Audrey was a registered nurse. She married Bob McDonald and they farmed east of Alcomdale.

Vivian married Bill Manson and lived in Edmonton. They had four children.

Doyle married Helen Tchir. They lived in Edmonton and had one daughter.

Willis and Rosalie celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary in 1978. At the time they were living in Sicamous, British Columbia.

The early neighbours of the Collins family while on the farm were numerous. On what is known as the Whyatt farm, was a bachelor named Bob Owens. He lived until nearly 100 years old, but not on the farm. The Gale Ashbaugh family lived there for two years, then the Gordon family. Allen Hastings, a young fellow from Scotland, bought this quarter, possibly from Mr. Gordon. He sold it later to Isaac Whyatt and then Gordon Meakin.

The O'Brien-Smith farm was once owned by John Lorer who built a house, a store and a post office there. This was also called Independence. Mr. and Mrs. Fred Gore also lived on this farm at one time, later selling it to Arthur O'Brien-Smith. It was then owned by Martin Farms. Pete Graph and family lived where Mr. and Mrs. Charles Stitsen lived. Mr. Graph sold his farm to Bill Louch. A Mr. Connelly of the Connelly and McKinley Funeral Chapel owned the James Mitchell farm at one time. The Pickerings were on the corner, a mile and a half south of the Collins farm. Henry Brownings rented the Collins farm while the Collins family was in Nebraska.

Comeau, Alfred & Madeleine

By Alfred Comeau

I attended Mearns School for grade one in 1953 and vaguely recall the small school and the Nuns teaching us the basics of life. My dad, George Comeau, and my Uncle Willy Comeau hauled grain to the Mearns elevators. I have few memories of this time as I moved on to the convent in Lac La Biche for the next year and then on to follow Dad on the drilling rigs for several years after, until we settled in Drayton Valley in the late 50's. I completed high school in Drayton Valley and went on to the University of Alberta to complete a degree in Electrical Engineering in 1969. After working in industry for several years, I started a consulting engineering company called A. Comeau & Associates Ltd. The company was successful and found a niche market in supplying packaged control systems for the oil industry worldwide. In 2002 Schlumberger purchased the company with the employees and has carried on the same operation for the last five years. I still own the family farm near Mearns, originally purchased in 1899 by my



George & Theresa Comeau on their wedding day – 1933

grandfather, Alfred Comeau (Como), son of Moise Comeau who came to the Mearns/Riviere Qui Barre area from Cloud County, Kansas, along with his brothers (my great uncles) Delphis, Ludger, Louis, Onésime (Big Jim) and Edouard. For more information on the Comeau family history, see the Riviere Qui Barre history book The Wheels of Time, (1978).

In my spare time I dabble at farming and raising Arabian horses for international competition.

In 1970 I married Madeleine Chalifoux from the Beaumont area, and we have four beautiful daughters: Nathalie Jackson (became an Electrical Engineer) who now set up a “Touch for Healing” center called Circles of Light in Edmonton; Anique Shields (Fine Arts major) who works at painting and opera singing; Nadine Laffin (Electrical Technologist) who is now obtaining her degree in Agriculture; Diane Comeau who is completing her grade 12 at J.H. Picard. Diane is an international competitor in Arabian horse dressage and has won international competitions in English Pleasure riding in both Canada and the United States.

We have four grandchildren and love to spend time spoiling them for their parents. The photo has all four daughters, their husbands, and the four grandchildren taken New Years 2007.



Alfred & Madeleine Comeau Family

Comeau, Edouard (Edward) Family History

(Information gathered from several sources – mostly oral stories about the early pioneers passed on to Leonard Nobert from his father Frederic Nobert and other old timers of the area.)

Joseph (Como) Comeau was born January 10, 1820 in Quebec. On October 5, 1847, he married Flore Doucet who was born February 15, 1829.



Joseph and Flore (Doucet) Comeau in the foreground – circa early 1890's

Around 1869, Joe and Flora decided to leave Ste-Gertrude, Quebec and settle with their family in Kansas. Joseph and Flore's children were: Moise (married Adrienne Gagnon in 1874), Delphis (married Philemon), Ludger (married Malvina Bachand in 1877), Louis (married Arthemise Savoie in 1880), Flore (died as an infant), Clarice (married Remi Breault in 1875), Onésime (married Félicité Labonté in 1882), Obeline (married Frank Nobert in 1877), Lumina (married Joseph Bâchand in 1880), Joseph (married Delvina Boudreau in 1883), Adolphus (died at 16 yrs.), and Edouard (married Delima Trahan in 1888).

Edouard (Como) Comeau was born in St. Gertrude, Nicolet County, Quebec on April 25, 1868, the youngest of 12 children born to Joseph and Flore (Doucet) Comeau. He and Delima were married on January 9, 1888 in St. Joseph, Cloud County, Kansas. They moved to a homestead in the Mearns/Riviere Qui Barre area on 178.4 acres of land (NW/NE-13-56-27-W4) purchased from the CPR at \$3.00 per acre on April 2, 1900.

Some of Edouard's older brothers and a sister had already made the move from Kansas to the Mearns/Riviere Qui Barre area prior to their father's death in February 1899. The Glenbow Museum/Archives CPR Land Sales show that Ludger Como purchased 160 acres (SE 9-54-26-W4) from the CPR at \$3.50 per acre on July 27, 1894 and Louis purchased 160 acres (SW 15-54-26-W4) from the CPR at \$3.50 per acre on August 13th, 1894. Louis then purchased another quarter section (NE 15-54-26-W4) in August of 1898 at \$3.00 per acre. In July of 1899, brother Moise (Moses) purchased a half section (SE/SW 1-56-27-W4) and in December of 1899, Onésime purchased one and a half sections of CPR land (NE/SE/SW/NW 13-55-27-W4) and (NE/SE 23-55-27-W4) for \$3.00 per acre. Joseph Como purchased the SE 19-56-26-W4



The Comeau sisters, Obeline Nobert, Lumina Bachand and Clarice Breault

quarter section of land in February 1902. This quarter section was bought by Mr. Justin Douziech and later purchased by Fred and Alice Nobert. It now belongs to their son, Leonard Nobert.

Clarice (Como) Breault, who had lost her husband in Kansas, decided to join her brothers in their long trek west and bought a quarter section of land from the CPR (NW 17-56-26-W4) in August of 1899. Her son Octave purchased section NE 18-56-26 (later owned by Maurice Durand) where they ran a boarding house or halfway house along a pioneer trail that led to the Klondike Trail. This boarding house was later demolished by Maurice Durand and the boards were re-used to build a chicken coop. Octave's wife, Emily (nee Morin), played the organ in the Mearns church for years. Another son, Moise, purchased quarter section SW 19-56-26-W4 from the CPR in October 1901. Clarice (Como) Breault had ten children: Moise (married Delia Chavey), Henri (married Louise Constantin), Josephine (married Fred Girard and remained in the U.S.), Louis (married Adeline Comeau, daughter of Moise Comeau), Emma (married Louis Turgeon), Léon (never married), Jean-Baptiste (married Rose Leclair), Napoleon (married Alice L'Abbe), Octave (married Emily Morin), and Louise (never married). The oldest son, Moise, died at St. Charles on July 8, 1921 at the age of 46.



Edouard and Delvina (Trahan) Comeau

Upon the death of her husband, Frank Nobert, Edouard's sister Obeline and her two year old daughter Clarice moved to the Mearns/Riviere Qui Barre area to join her son Walter Nobert and claim the land her husband had purchased in June of 1900 (NE-7-56-26-W4). For more information on Obeline refer to the Nobert Family History.

Edouard's mother, Flore, after the death of her husband Joseph, decided to join the majority of her children and came to live with her daughter Clarice Breault. She lived in the area until her death on March 12, 1903 at the age of 74 years 3 months. She is buried in the Villeneuve cemetery.



Remi and Clarice (Comeau) Breault Family. Front row L to R: Henri, Louise, Clarice, Moise, and Octave. Back row: Napoleon, Jean-Baptiste (Pat), Josephine, Louis, Emma, and Leon (Charlie)

There is a story told, whether rumor or truth, of Edouard having his fortune read and being told that he would soon encounter misfortune and to beware of such and such a date. As the date approached, Edouard laughed it off and jokingly remarked that if this was going to be his last day on earth, he might as well enjoy it. He headed off to the Shamrock



Edouard Comeau (Como) 1868 - 1911 holding "Joseph Napoleon" 1897 - 1983 daughters Elise -1892, Delphine -1890 Delia -1893, and Philomene -1895 Delvina (Trahan) Como 1869 - 1928 holding "Gideon" -1899

Edouard Comeau (Como) holding Joseph Napoleon (1897-1983), daughters Elise (1892), Delphine (1890), Delia (1893) Philomene (1895), and Delima holding Gideon (1899). Photo taken circa 1900

Hotel in Riviere Qui Barre to have a few drinks with his buddies. During the course of the evening he got into a wrestling match with a cousin and got a knee to the abdomen. A few hours later, on July 28, 1912, he died of internal injuries. Tragically, he left behind his wife, Delvina and eleven children: Delphine, Elise, Delia, Philomene, Napoleon, Gedeon, Albertine, Ella, Henri, Celina and Alphonse. Delvina died in 1928 and is buried in the Riviere Qui Barre cemetery along with her husband.

Members of the Comeau (Como)/ Breault/ Nobert families were some of the earliest pioneers to the area and have left many generations of descendants. In the Oblate journals of 1905, Edouard Como, Telesphore Nobert and the Breaults are mentioned by Fr. Simonin as being some of the financial contributors to the St. Charles church. In 1918, when the 415-pound church bell was blessed by Archbishop Emile Legal, o.m.i., the bell bore the name of St. Charles. One of the godparents on that occasion was Onésime Como.



Onesime Comeau & Felicite (Labonte). Back row: Madelina, Albert, and Euginie. Front row: Leonard, Edmond & Edna



Joseph Comeau & Delvina (Boudreau) with children George, Louise, Henry, Edouard and William



Moise Comeau & Adrienne (Gagnon) with children Alfred, Flore, Adelina, Hector, Francois and Napoleon

Craig, Randy & Judy (Kluthe)

By Judy Craig

Born on August 29, 1962 by the name of Karen Judy Kluthe, I was always known as Judy. Growing up on the family farm was childhood at its best. While growing up, all of the chores like milking the cows, preparing meals for the family after school during harvest time, and gathering veggies from the garden during the summer for supper were not considered fun.

Who would have thought that those "chores" would turn into an appreciation of things. I carried that love of plants with me into adulthood and now enjoy baking for my own family. While living on the family farm until 1980, I was involved in the Riviere Qui Barre 4-H Sewing and Beef Clubs and was a member of the Mearns church choir until I moved to Edmonton for employment, upon graduation from high school.



Judy Kluthe with 4-H Steer, RQB 4-H Beef Club



Randall and Judy (Kluthe) Craig married August 19, 1989

I married Randal (Randy) John Craig on August 19, 1989 at the St. Albert Catholic Church. All of our children were born in St. Albert, with our first daughter, Karalee Michelle Craig, born on August 28, 1990. Brandon John Craig was born on January 6, 1993 and Krista Karen Craig was born on March 30, 1995. We were actively involved within the St. Albert community, with a particular interest in hockey. We lived in St. Albert in the areas of Akinsdale and Oakmont until we moved into our newly constructed home in September of 2005 on Kluthe farmland, subdividing 2.47 acres. Both Randy and I are currently employed with the Greater St. Albert Catholic School District. Our eldest daughter, Karalee, is currently attending school at Sturgeon Composite High School and Brandon and Krista are attending Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre.

I found that by living in a different community for 26 years and then returning, it actually gives you a greater sense and appreciation of what the Mearns community is like. It is a genuine, warm, comfortable, and most welcoming community in which we are blessed to be able to bring our children up for the remainder of their childhood. It truly feels like I am "home" again.



Children of Judy and Randall Craig in photo taken in Jasper in 2005. L to R: Krista, Karalee and Brandon

Cunningham Family History

By Terry Cunningham

John Cunningham

John was born in 1823, the son of Patrick Cunningham and Nancy Bruce. He married Rosalie L'Hirondelle in 1847 at Lac St. Anne. Rosalie, born in 1829 at Lesser Slave Lake, was the daughter of Jacque L'Hirondelle and Josette Pilon.

John and Rosalie lived in St. Albert. He was a postmaster clerk at Fort Edmonton in 1858. They had eleven children:

- Catherine was born in 1847.
- Samuel was born in 1849, married Suzanne Gray.
- John was born in 1851, married Rose Bruyere.
- James was born in 1854, married Mary Hudson.
- Alberta was born in 1856, married Justin Breland.
- Nancy was born in 1858.
- Edward was born in 1862, he later became a priest.
- Daniel was born in 1864, married Virginie Page.
- Rachelle was born in 1866.
- Twin boys were born in 1868; Henry married Mary Lowland and Alfred married Emelia Rowland.

Daniel Cunningham

Pioneer homesteaders, Daniel and Virgie, had two sons and two daughters:

- Tobias (Toby) Daniel was born on March 31, 1890 in St. Albert.
- Albertine was born in 1891.
- Charles Louis was born in 1892.
- Clothilde was born in 1894.



Daniel & Virginie Cunningham

Tobias (Toby) Daniel Cunningham

After the death of his mother at the age of six, Toby was raised at the St. Albert Mission where he graduated from grade eight. He then joined a caravan of freighters who hauled supplies with horses from Edmonton to Fort McMurray, Wabasca, Athabasca and the Edson area before the railroads served those districts.

Tobias (Toby) married Maria (Maude) Emma Logan, daughter of Nathaniel and Sarah Logan, on June 18th, 1912. Together they purchased a half



Sarah & Nathaniel Logan

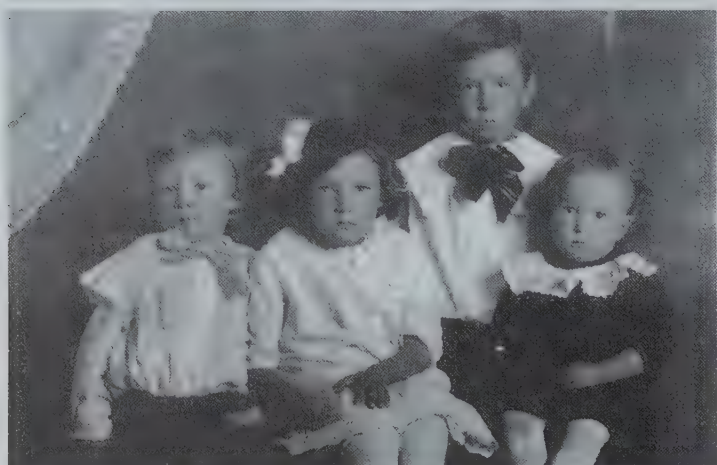


Toby & Maude Cunningham

section of CPR land in the Egg Lake area, a few miles north of Morinville, and remained there until his retirement in November 1957. At that time they moved to Jasper Place in Edmonton.

Toby was active in the Alberta Wheat Pool. He was also a school trustee for 40 years and was the first chairman of the Sturgeon School Division Board. A school is named after him in Morinville. While living in the Egg Lake area Toby and Maria would also board the local schoolteachers at their home.

Together they had five sons; Harvey, Gordon, Walter, Ernest, and Fred and three daughters; Gertrude, Gladys and Josephine.



Gordon, Gertrude, Harvey and Gladys Cunningham



Toby & Maude Cunningham

Harvey Daniel Cunningham

Harvey was born on April 16, 1913 at Egg Lake. He attended school at Egg Lake and married Fleurisca Denise Dupuis on December 30, 1935 in Morinville. Fleurisca was born on March 6, 1916. Harvey worked as a lumber foreman at JC McLeod Building & Supplies. In their later years they loved to go camping in and around B.C. Harvey passed away December 22, 1972 and Fleurisca on April 25, 1973. They had seven children:

- Lloyd was born in 1937.
- Irene was born on January 8, 1940 and married Bob Dreany on August 2, 1969. They had two

children: Brian was born on July 1, 1970 and Bruce was born on August 8, 1972. Bruce married Maureen Langevin and had a daughter Jenna, born on November 7, 2000.

- Margaret was born on March 11, 1941 and had three children: Amy, born on December 28, 1961, Dorothy, born on April 26, 1963, and Shirley, born on June 6, 1967. Amy had three children: Carleen (who gave birth to Juleanne on May 30, 2000) was born on September 10, 1981, Kathryn was born on January 12, 1988 and Amanda was born on May 16, 1989. Dorothy had one daughter Menelle, who was born on March 11, 1993. Shirley had two daughters: Alisyn, born on May 14, 1993 and Madeline, born on July 2, 1999.
- Joan was born in 1943 and married Ken Stewart. They had two children: Dean Stuart, born in 1971 and Sherry born in 1974. Dean was married to Jennifer and they had two children: Kelton, born in 1997 and Beth, born in 1990. Sherry married Jason Wilcox and they had two children: Cody, born in 1994 and Courtney, born in 1997.
- Alice had two children; Kim was born on January 18, 1968 and Tara was born on August 26, 1969.
- Dora was born on April 16, 1952 and married James Winiski on January 27, 1973. They had four children; John Paul was born on June 9, 1973, Theresa Ann was born on April 26, 1976, Patrick James was born on November 25, 1977 and Linda Marie was born on March 4, 1979. Dora is a teacher assistant.
- Donald was born February 25, 1957 and passed away on January 14, 1999.

Gordon Joseph Cunningham

Gordon was born on July 2, 1916, at Egg Lake. Gordon attended the Egg Lake School. He married Mariette Louise Vandenhouten on July 24, 1944 at St. Charles Church in Mearns. Gordon farmed in Mearns until 1958 when they moved to an acreage on the south side of Edmonton. They lived there until 1963 then moved into what was then Jasper Place, on the west side of Edmonton.

After leaving the farm, Gordon worked as a carpenter and then as a custodian for the Edmonton Catholic Schools until he retired in 1981. In retirement, Gordon enjoyed playing cards and carpet bowling with a local senior's group that he helped form in the Mayfield area. He also was a participant in the 1988 senior summer games. Gordon passed away on June 29, 1998.

Gordon and Mariette had four children: Terry, Eileen, Lillian and Fern.

- Terry was born on October 19, 1945. (His story follows.)
- Eileen was born on November 24, 1947 and

married Arthur Roy on October 7, 1967. They had two children, Roxanne and Ashley. Roxanne married Mark Ross and they have three children, Rebecca, Aaron and Jesse. Ashley married Darcie Stein and they have two sons, Justin and Carter.

- Lillian was born on April 16, 1952 and married Jerry Wilk.
- Fern was born on April 14, 1957 and married Danie Hardie on August 14, 1976. They had two children, Christina Brooke and Cassandra (Casey) Nichole.

Terry Cunningham

I was born on October 19, 1945, the oldest child of Gordon and Margaret (Mariette) Cunningham. Our family lived on the SW10-57-26-W4 until 1958 when we moved to Edmonton. While on the farm I completed grades one to seven at St. Charles School in Mearns. I graduated from St. Francis Xavier High School in Edmonton in 1963. Upon graduation I went to work at McCoy Bros., and was employed there until the fall of 1968. From there I went to work for Pacific Finance and in the spring of 1969 I transferred to their Saskatoon office.

On January 31, 1970 I married Linda Wallster. We had two daughters: Terri Lynn, born on October 9, 1972 and Lana Marie, born on December 18, 1974. We also have three grandsons: Parker, age six, Carson, age four and Tyler, age one.

In April of 1970 I went to work for the Bank of Nova Scotia and was with them until the spring of 1993. During my 23 years with the bank we lived in nine different centers and I worked in 16 different branches, all in Saskatchewan. From 1995 to 2000 I worked for Gregg's Plumbing and Heating in Saskatoon as service manager. In November of 2000 we moved to Westlock, Alberta so we could be closer to our family.

I have many fond memories of my years on the farm. Many, many hours we spent playing with the Verhulst family and the VanHove family and with my cousins, the Vandenhoutens.

I don't think many will ever forget the Christmas concerts held in the church basement. Many hours were spent practicing our part in a play or song. I also remember the celebration at the church on the first Friday of each month. During the spring I always looked forward to the track meets where we had an opportunity to meet children from the other schools in the area.

Once we were settled into our home in Westlock, one of the first places I went to was Mearns. I was shocked to find that the school and skating rink were no longer standing.

I was honoured to work on the St. Charles School Reunion. We had a great group of people

who worked very well together. It was very gratifying to see the large turnout. I had a great time walking the grounds, meeting and chatting with so many former schoolmates.

At the present time I am working for Professional Horticulture Services in Westlock doing lawn care and landscaping. I am, however, starting to think of retirement so I can spend more time on my yard, fishing, hunting and visiting.

Walter Cunningham

Born on October 3, 1920 at Egg Lake, Walter married Louise Bernard on August 19, 1947 in Calgary, Alberta. Walter joined the army and was in the Medical Corp teaching personal hygiene. He was transferred every three to four years. He retired at Camp Borden in 1970 and moved to Oshawa. After his retirement he became a food inspector for the southern Ontario area. Walter and Louise had seven children:

- Ron was born on October 31, 1947 and lives in Oshawa, Ontario.
- Marilyn Burns was born on January 12, 1949 and lives in Toronto, Ontario and has two children: Cheryl was born on August 4, 1969 and Cindi was born on November 9, 1972.
- Rita Martin was born on June 19, 1951 and lives in Ottawa and has two children; Jodie and Douglas.
- Frances Susan Hart was born on May 20, 1957 and lives in Ajax, Ontario and has two children: Tim, born on May 26, 1986 and Caitlin, born on January 30, 1993.
- Daniel was born on June 15, 1966 and lives in Ajax, Ontario.
- Mark was born on January 3, 1964 and lives in Oshawa.
- Theresa was born on September 30, 1961 and passed away on September 26, 1996.



Toby, Walter & Maude Cunningham

Ernest Cunningham

Born on June 24, 1922 Ernest attended school in Mearns, Alberta. From 1939 to 1945 Ernest was

overseas. He married Ruth Deacon on June 28, 1948 in Calgary, Alberta.

During his time in the army, Ernest was stationed in Calgary and Wainwright. He then worked as a special constable for the RCMP in St. Albert and also at the Alberta Liquor Control Board (ALCB) in St. Albert until his retirement. Ernest passed away on August 5, 1992.



Maria Emma Cunningham, Mom (Granny Logan), and Ernest Cunningham

Ernest and Ruth had four children:

- Gary was born on May 15, 1949 and had two children: Sherry Lynn and Leanne
- Eunice was born on September 28, 1950 and married Rick Wright. They had two children: Steven, born on April 8, 1971 and passed away on January 10, 1989, and Dawn, who had two children, Khilil and Cassie.
- Darlene was born on September 2, 1951 and married Ron Adams. They had two children, Cory and Bradley.
- Lorna was born on April 15, 1955 and had three children: Billy Jo who has a son Brandon, Clinton and Courtney

Frederick James Cunningham

Born on December 31, 1928, Fred is the youngest child of Tobias and Maria. He went to school at Egg Lake and then farmed with his father until 1955. While on the farm he drove school bus around Alcomdale from 1952 to 1953. He also worked at Mills Motors in Alcomdale from 1951 to 1953. Frederick married Hazel Marguerite Borle (born May 9, 1938) on June 14, 1954 in Onoway, Alberta.

In 1954 Fred bought his own three-ton truck and hauled coal from Egg Lake Coal Mine to the Edmonton Powerhouse, High Prairie Hospital and oil wells around Drayton Valley and Violet Grove.

In 1955 Fred and Hazel left the farm and moved to Edmonton. Fred worked for McLeod Building Supplies from 1955 to 1957, at which time he went to work for Palm Dairies from 1957 to 1964.

In 1964 he started working for the Edmonton Separate School Board, first driving truck and tractor for two years, then becoming head custodian at Notre Dame School for 14 years. He then transferred to St. Benedict School for one year and then to Our Lady of Peace School where he worked as head custodian for 10 years.

Fred and Hazel worked together at Our Lady of Peace School for five years. They both retired at the same time in August of 1991. They moved into a condominium and after they retired they did some traveling to places like Disneyland, Hawaii, Victoria, Las Vegas, Ontario, Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia.



Gladys (Cunningham) Laflamme and Fred Cunningham

They had six children, five sons and one daughter:

- Glen Frederick was born on April 14, 1955. Glen is living in B.C.
- Ricky Daniel was born on March 13, 1956. Ricky married Sharon Calahaisn on August 20, 1974. They had three children: Francine Barbara was born on November 18, 1984, Sabrina Ann was born on April 28, 1986 and Jennifer Danielle was born on June 24, 1987.
- Charlotte Sylvia was born on February 25, 1957 and married Tony Carr on April 8, 1995 and she had one son, Nicholas Toby Hauk, born on July 28, 1981.
- Dale Rene was born on March 21, 1958 and married Debbie Friesen on August 19, 1995 in St. Albert. He has two stepchildren: Melissa Dawn, born on December 2, 1981 and Michelle Lea, born

on July 11, 1983. Dale also has one granddaughter, Makayla Dawn, born on March 20, 1999.

- Lee Gregory was born on July 8, 1959 and married Shana Nolan on August 14, 1993 and has one child, Logan Ryan, born on January 18, 2000.
- James Darcy was born on May 26, 1964 and married Judy Madeline Hauck in Provost, Alberta. They have two children: Daniel Frederick, born on March 18, 1991 and Alexandra Theresa, born on January 12, 1995.

Gertrude Cunningham

Born on November 22, 1914. Passed away on February 1921.

Gladys Cunningham

Gladys was born on August 26, 1918 at Egg Lake and attended the school at Egg Lake for grades one to nine, then went to the Sisters of Assumption Convent in Edmonton for grades 10 to 12, where she learned French. She then continued her schooling in Camrose. She taught at Gougeon School in Girouxville where she met her first husband. When Gladys retired from teaching in 1968 she moved to Edmonton and in 1975 moved to Sidney B.C. She moved back to Edmonton in 1990 and is now living at Chateau Mission Court in St. Albert.

Gladys and her husband had six children:

- Lawrence was born on September 21, 1939, is married and is an accountant, living in Camrose, Alberta.
- Clement was born on September 21, 1941, is married and is a truck driver in Wemby, Alberta.
- Marcel was born on September 30, 1942, was a truck driver and lived in Whitecourt, Alberta. He passed away on October 1, 2003.
- Ernest was born on June 4, 1944, was a teacher and lived in Winnipeg, Manitoba. He passed away on March 29, 2005.
- Kenneth was born on April 6, 1946, is married and is a supervisor of maintenance for Edmonton Catholic Schools and lives in Edmonton.
- Sharon was born on May 4, 1949, is married to Les Webb. She is a school bus driver and a

secretary in their business. They live in St. Albert, Alberta.

Josephine Johanne Cecilia Cunningham

Born January 5, 1925 Josephine married Lloyd William (Bill) McLeod on August 19, 1948 at St. Charles Church in Mearns, Alberta. Bill worked for Palm Dairies and at the Catholic School Board as a small engine mechanic. They had four children:



McLeod Family 1964. Back row: Bill and daughter, Doreen. Front row: Dwayne and Josephine

- Shellah Anne was born on August 2, 1945 and married Byren Hanson. They live in Sacramento, California and had a son, Greg, born on July 31, 1966 who also lives in Sacramento, California.
- Doreen Cecilia was born on May 23, 1949 and married Raymond St. Germain on January 21, 1966. They had three children; Michael William born on April 2, 1967, Kevin, born February 27, 1968 and Charmaine Bernadette, born April 21, 1977. Michael married Margaret (Peggy) Thompson in Rycroft, Alberta and they had four children: Meagan, born on Oct 27, 1989, Maria



Gladys, Josephine, Ernest, Walter and Gordon Cunningham

born on September 3, 1991, Mandelle Rayleen born on November 28, 1993 and Zachary Michael, born on July 15, 1995.)

- Brenda was born on July 1, 1956 and passed away at birth.
- Dwayne Daniel was born on April 20, 1960 and married Cecile Patricia Lakusta on June 7, 1980 at Holy Spirit Church in Edmonton. They had two children, Matthew Ernest born on September 15, 1981 and Daniel William born on March 5, 1986.

Darroch, Stuart & Beatrice

By daughter, Lois Baker

My father, Stuart Darroch, purchased the section (Sec 3-57-26-W4), or was "given it" for clearing it and bringing it to farmland prior to 1910. He was born in Ontario, moved with his parents to Portage LaPrairie, went to school there, and then moved to Carievale, Saskatchewan and from there as a young man moved to Alcomdale for his "homestead" land. He later moved to Edmonton to go into real estate. He took a room at my grandmother's home on Fraser Ave. in Edmonton and married her daughter, Beatrice (my mother) in 1912. My sister, Jean was born in 1916 and I was born in 1924.

My mother's brother, Walter Purches, raised six children on the section. In the late 1930's they moved to the city of Edmonton and my father at different times sold three of the quarters. In 1942, the government of Alberta put a mineral tax on such homesteads. When my father was about to sell the last quarter, I suggested he take a separate title to the minerals. He did and I still have that.

In the good weather, when the corduroy road into the farm was ok, the four of us made frequent trips to visit our cousins. Other times, my father took me to visit and we drove to Busby and other little towns nearby. In the summer of 2002, my daughter, her husband and three children and myself drove all around that area. The farms looked lush and green and we saw the Alcomdale pipeline on an adjoining quarter. I always have a fond spot for the many visits I made to the area in the days of mixed farming. So many experiences!!! So many animals, chickens, chores and of course, the crop and the "threshers"!

DeRudder Emile & Mary

Submitted by son, Morris DeRudder

Emile Audolph DeRudder lived his younger years west of Morinville. His parents were Camile and Mary DeRudder. He was the oldest of six children. He was born May 6, 1927.

Mary Helen Byer lived all her life on the farmstead started by her parents, Morris and Maria Byer, when they came from Germany. Mary was the youngest of four children and was born on June 19, 1927. Morris and Maria Byer farmed their land until Mary married Emile DeRudder in the church in Mearns on August 8, 1950. Father J. Merchant officiated at the wedding.



Emile DeRudder – 1961

Emile and Mary had three children, Walter Thomas DeRudder born October 28, 1955, Morris Camile DeRudder born March 31, 1959 and Mary-Ann Helen DeRudder born August 1, 1962.

Emile passed away on November 22, 1973 at the early age of 46. Mary and her children stayed on the farm until they went their own ways.

Walter went into road construction and was out of town a lot working in different areas of Alberta most of his life. He married Dolores Manning on November 10, 2001 and moved back to the farm.



Mary-Ann, Mary, Walter, Morris DeRudder

Morris worked a few years in Edmonton as a carpenter and then got a full time job working at the Villeneuve gravel pits. He lived on the farm all his life. He married Collette Desharnais of Edmonton on June 30, 2001 and they are still living on the farm.

Mary-Ann DeRudder moved to Edmonton in the early 1980's. In the late 1980's, she moved to Vancouver B.C. with her friend and lived out by the coast. She passed away September 23, 1993 at the early age of 31.

Mary stayed on the farm with her two boys in her house until September 2003 and then moved to the Morinville Seniors Home due to her health. She



Morris, Collette and Shylough DeRudder – Christmas 2002

enjoyed it there with people her age. She played cards, bingo, talked to people without even leaving the building. She then took very ill with cancer and passed away March 8, 2004 at the age of 76.

Her two boys, Wally and Morris are still living on the old farmstead.

DeRudder, Peter & Victoria

Submitted by Victoria DeRudder

Peter was born in Morinville, Alberta on October 27, 1929 and raised in the Morinville area on a farm NE 13-56-26-W4.

Peter was the second youngest son in the family of five children born to Louis and Anna DeRudder.



Peter and Vicki DeRudder in photo taken October 1985

Peter attended Tellier School from grade one to grade eight. When Peter finished school he worked on the farm with his family.

Peter married Victoria Dziewiontkowski from Highridge at St. Jean Baptiste Catholic Church in Morinville on October 17, 1950. Victoria was born in Vimy, Alberta on March 11, 1932, the daughter of Anton and Helen Dziewiontkowski.

After their marriage, Peter and Victoria settled on the former Carl Shuster homestead SE 25-56-26-W4.

Peter and Victoria took over the original family farm when Louis and Anna DeRudder moved to Morinville in 1956. They farmed there for a number of years and in December 1963 they moved to St. Albert.

Victoria worked at the Youville Home as a nursing aide. Peter and his sons traveled showing their Registered Quarter Horses at the Edmonton Gardens and surrounding areas. They won many trophies and ribbons. Peter also worked for North American Roads in construction.

They moved to Boyle, Alberta on the former Fred Sheremata homestead SE 18-64-20-W4 in 1974 where they farmed for several years.



Peter and Victoria DeRudder and their seven children in 1995. Back row L to R: Holly, and Gloria. Front row L to R: Bev, Gary, Victoria, Peter, Doug, Trevor, Lila

Then in 1981 they moved to Redwater where Victoria worked as a licensed practical nurse at the General Hospital in Redwater.

Peter spent a great amount of time on their farm SE 34-58-22-W4 in the Egremont area with his horses.

Peter and Victoria celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on October 17, 2000. They raised seven children: Gary, Gloria, Doug, Lila, Bev, Trevor and

Holly. They are all married now with homes and families of their own.

Peter and Victoria have sixteen grandchildren and nine great grandchildren.

Peter was killed in a tragic single vehicle accident on November 8, 2004.

DeRudder, Rene & Sylvia

Submitted by Rene DeRudder

I married Sylvia Borle on November 6, 1950 at the Lac La Nonne Catholic Church. After this we moved on to the Hews farm, which had been purchased by my father prior to our wedding. So here we are farming and working out to make ends meet. Our first child, a girl, Valorie, was born on December 3, 1951.

This, our home and land, was $3\frac{3}{4}$ miles west of Riopel School or $\frac{3}{4}$ mile west of the Egg Lake Mine road on the Mearns high grade. Our second child miscarried when we went out for Sylvia's birthday with Freddie and Hazel Cunningham on Nov 19, 1953. Our car was stolen while we were out. We discovered this when we returned. The car was found in Calgary a few days later.

So life goes on, farming and working out to make ends meet, raising chickens, pigs and a few cattle. I bought a three-ton truck with a six-yard gravel box and hauled coal to Edmonton Power House for \$1.25 per ton, also some sand and gravel to Edcon Blocks from the pit at Waugh. Johnny Polakovits drove the truck in the spring while I was putting in the crop.

I lost my kid brother, Edward De Rudder, in 1954 at Egg Lake Coal Mine in an unfortunate accident. Our second daughter was born on June 17, 1955. Our crop was hailed out that year and in 1956, a frost took care of that crop. So in the spring of 1957, with no future in farming and no help, I packed up my girls, moved to the big city and bought a new two bedroom unfinished house for \$9,000 at 9611-162 Street.

I had sold my truck before I left the farm. Now I took up carpentry very seriously as I had a family to feed and a house to pay for. I went to work for the people who built my house, Olmsted Construction, for four years. I then worked for Mac & Mitch Construction for 22 years. I was job sight construction superintendent for seven years with New West Construction and then worked in customer relations for Reb Homes until December 21, 1990 when I retired. Wow, 65 at last!

Time to take it easy, as the special day is December 15, 1990... do a little fishing, traveling and a bit of hunting.

We just returned from four weeks in Belgium. Wow, what we have seen! Unbelievable! My father came from there in 1913. Lots of cousins!

Douziech, Napoleon & Nancy (Kochen)

(Written from information obtained by Leonard Nobert from Napoleon & Nancy Douziech)

Napoleon Douziech was born in Mearns, Alberta on November 20th, 1913. He is the eldest son of Justin and Edna Douziech (nee Comeau), one



Louis DeRudder Farm. This is where we lived from 1950 to 1957 in the Mearns area.



The Justin Douziech Family

of the earlier pioneering couples to settle in the Mearns/Riviere Qui Barre area. The family consisted of 11 children, six boys and four girls: Napoleon, Victor, Roland, Rev. Edmond, Marie Jeanne, Louis, Leonard, Leopaul, Pauline, Therese and Cecile.

Napoleon, along with his siblings, spent his early childhood years living in a square one-storey house built by his father on a farm located five miles north of Riviere Qui Barre (the farm Frederic Nobert later purchased). Farming at the time was hard. The land had to be cleared, brush cutting was done by axe in hand, ploughing was done walking behind a team of horses. Everything was so labor intensive – stooking and threshing. The Douziech family worked hard together and prospered. In 1927, his father Justin purchased a quarter section of land from John Stevens four miles north of Riviere Qui Barre, built a modern two-storey brick house with all the amenities of the day and moved his family there. Napoleon attended Belle Valley School and went on to college in Edmonton to complete his schooling.

Napoleon married Nancy Kochen of Flatbush, Alberta on May 28th, 1942. He continued farming

with his father until the family farm was sold to Mr. Poltorak in 1948. Napoleon and Nancy moved to Morinville where he worked for the Municipal District of Sturgeon as heavy equipment operator. In 1956, they moved to Edmonton. They raised a family of four children, three sons and one daughter: Raymond, Yvonne, Roger and Richard. Their son Raymond is a Redemptorist priest. He holds a PhD in Psychology & Theology and is presently Consulor General for the Vatican in Rome.

Napoleon and Nancy are still living in their own home in Edmonton and celebrated 65 years of marriage in May of 2007. At 94 years of age, and as an added piece of history, Napoleon is the oldest person still living today who was born and lived in the Mearns area.



Nap and Nancy Douziech on their wedding day, May 28, 1942 and 65 years later on their 65th wedding anniversary

Douziech, Victor & Jeanne (Cloutier)

(From a telephone interview between Maureen Slecza and Mr. Victor Douziech, at age 90.)



Nap and Nancy's four children, L to R: Richard, Yvonne Hayne, Roger and Fr. Raymond, CSsR

Victor Douziech began school in the newly built Belle Valley School (located on the Wills' farm) at five years of age. Belle Valley was a two-room schoolhouse with the little kids in one class and high school kids in the other. Vic and his brother Nap were French-speaking boys going to an English-speaking school. On that first morning, Miss Marcella Fitzgerald addressed her class, asking everyone's name. Vic recalls being so scared that both brothers looked at each other, reached for their caps and began down the steps, racing home. The school sent two big boys Rene Bourbonnais and Johnny Stevens to catch them and bring them back.

In those early days Vic recalls there were no

roads, as we know them to be. Roads were built with a v-shaped ditch. Everything from that ditch, roots and dirt were piled on top to build the road. They soon realized it was not a good method because those roots would decompose and make holes but it was the way they used then. They rode to school on horseback. One year, while riding Prince to school, the horse tripped on the newly built road. Young Vic was riding Prince when the horse tripped, turned right over and fell on his back into that v-shaped ditch. Vic was on his saddle with his feet in the stirrups. He was caught under the horse. Both were struggling with the horses' hooves flailing, coming awfully close to Vic's head. Eventually Vic was able to free his feet and calm the horse enough to get out from under.



Original Douziech house built in 1928, as it stands today

In winter the horse pulled the kids to school on a stone boat (a platform on 2x10 runners attached to a shaft taken from an old buggy). Rocks were heated in the oven, wrapped in cloth and put on the stone boat to provide heat as they traveled the one-mile to school. Vic remembers being so cold he froze his face and hands. His brother Nap, worried about him, tried to hurry up the horse but it just made matters worse. Vic's face blistered as a result of frostbite. At school, horses were kept in a barn and feed was brought from home to feed the animals during the day. Everyone brought their own water. Some children brought their lunch to school in lard pails; others had actual lunch kits.

As Vic got older he had the job of stoking the fires each evening, sweeping and oiling the floors and firing up the stove in the morning. These were the days before insulation. The trustees paid him \$70 a year for doing this job.

In those days the big boys played football, the "real" tackling type of football. One day someone kicked the ball into the toilet. Walter Fitzgerald, the teacher at that time, wanted Vic to retrieve the ball, as the school board probably bought the equipment,



The Victor Douziech Family – circa 1964. Back row L to R: Normand, Alphonse, Lorraine, Maurice, Lucille, Denis, Germaine, Leon. Front row: Laurette, Jeanne, Victor and Laurier

but Vic refused. Vic's dad, Mr. Douziech, came to school and had quite a discussion with the teacher. Vic cannot remember the outcome, but he does remember another time when Fred Nobert got into trouble for laughing at the School Inspector's large ears. The Inspector grabbed Fred by the ear and made him kneel in the corner. That was common punishment back then.

Vic was born in 1915, the second eldest of the Justin and Edna Douziech family and attended Belle Valley until grade nine. He attended college for one year until his services were required on the farm. He helped build the church and rectory in Mearns and was married to Jeanne Cloutier in that same church in 1938. Vic and Jeanne had eleven children, seven boys: Maurice, Leon, Denis, Normand, Alphonse, Laurier, and Victor (Jr.) and four girls: Germaine, Lorraine, Lucille, and Laurette. Vic passed away on July 31, 2007 at the age of 91.

Some of his favorite sayings:

"Life is like a dream, it's way too short."

"Life is like a bowl of cherries, there are lots of pits."

Dubois, Richard & Louise (Belanger)

Submitted by Louise Dubois

We moved into the Alcomdale/Busby area in July 1991 with our three children, Terri, Michael and Katherine. We purchased the 30-acre homestead of Dan Trelleberg.

A lot of hard work was put into our home place as we converted it from a hog operation to a small horse ranch. Some older buildings and barns were torn down; others were converted to horse barns, tack sheds, equipment storage and/or shops. The old car garage was taken down in 2003 and a new one built. An outside riding arena was added in 1992.

We have raised some of our own foals and broke

a few horses. This is our family enjoyment. Along with this we enjoy tobogganing, sledding, 4-H at Independence, skating on our very own dugout and numerous wiener roasts for no matter what the season or the event.

We enjoy the tranquility, peacefulness and the neighbourly atmosphere that country living brings, certainly a quality of life to be treasured.

Rick and I both enjoy riding horses in the mountains and just for pleasure. We have learned to break some of our horses to harness. By doing this, it has allowed us to have sleigh rides and buggy rides as well as experiencing the old "pony express" by taking our horse to Alcomdale to pick up our mail on occasion.

In order to enjoy our hobby completely we must harvest our own feed. We cut, bale and pick square bales. This is always a fun event as family and friends always join us!

Having a larger yard means more grass to cut, trees to trim, flowers to tend to and a garden to plant and grow. With so many things on the go there is 'friendly' competition in the neighbourhood – from the most unique yard to growing the largest pumpkin.

The Alcomdale, Busby, and Mearns area is not unfamiliar territory for Rick, as his Uncle Eddie Verhulst and Aunt Mary (nee Perrott) resided here for many years. Uncle Eddie was also known in the area for picking up milk from the dairy farmers.

We both commute to St. Albert daily for our jobs.

Terri, our oldest daughter, only lived in the Alcomdale area for a short time, as her job as an insurance underwriter took her to Calgary. She lived there for 11 years and has recently moved back to Morinville.

Mike, our son, completed his high school years at Sturgeon Composite High School and then went on to Vermilion College for two years. He enjoys horse wrangling and working on ranches. He has also tried his hand at bull riding but found it to be a little on the 'rough and tough' side! He now resides in Morinville.

Kathy, our youngest daughter, completed her junior high school in Riviere Qui Barre and her high school at Sturgeon Composite High School. She is working towards completing her Teacher Aide certificate. At present she is working with handicapped adults in Barrhead. She and her husband, Troy Carnegie (from Westlock), reside at Lac La Nonne.

Although we miss our home and friends from the Villeneuve area, new friends have been made here. Our feet are planted and this is home!

Duchscher, Mervin & Doreen

Submitted by Doreen Duchscher

I, Doreen Marie Lutz am the second eldest of nine children. I was born in Edmonton on April 20, 1964. My parents are Joseph and Evelyn Lutz (Constantin).

I was raised on a farm just outside of Mearns along Highway 44. I attended Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre from grade one to nine then moved on to Sturgeon Composite High School in Namao for grades 10 to 12, where I graduated.

Mervin John Duchscher was born on April 19, 1957 in Unity, Saskatchewan. When he was three months old his family moved to St. Albert where they still live.

We were married on April 19, 1986 in the Morinville Catholic Church. We live on an acreage outside of Morinville, on Egg Lake Road.

We have four children. Our oldest child, a daughter, Kyla Marie was born June 10, 1987. She graduated from Sturgeon Composite High School in May of 2005.

Our second child, a son, Jamie John Valentine, was born February 14, 1989. He is in grade eleven at Sturgeon Composite High School.

Our third child, a daughter, Kierra Marie, was born September 15, 1990. She is in grade ten at Sturgeon Composite High School.

Our youngest child, a daughter, Savannah Marie, was born August 4, 1992. She is in grade eight and is attending Camilla School.



Mervin and Doreen Duchscher with children, Kyla, Savannah, Jamie, and Kierra.

Duncan, Jessie

This picture is of Jessie Duncan going to school in Alcomdale in 1948. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Duncan who lived two miles south and one half mile east of Alcomdale.



Durand, Maurice & Cecile

Submitted by Raymond Durand

My dad, Maurice Durand, was born in 1916 in Quebec. When he was 12 years old, his father Joseph and his uncle Archille moved to Alberta. Archille moved to Legal and Joseph to Edmonton. Joseph ran a dairy on Portage Ave. (Kingsway). When the municipal airport was built, they moved the dairy to St. Albert where Ron Hodgson is today.

My mother Cecile Laforce was born in 1919 on a farm east of Legal, next to Archille's farm, hence they met. Dad would peddle his bike from



Maurice Durand on the dairy wagon. His brother Armand is with the bull – (photo taken in 1935)

Edmonton to Legal and stay the weekend at his uncle's place to court my mother. They were married in 1938 and had four sons, Laurent, Lionel, Raymond and Patrick who all attended school in Mearns.

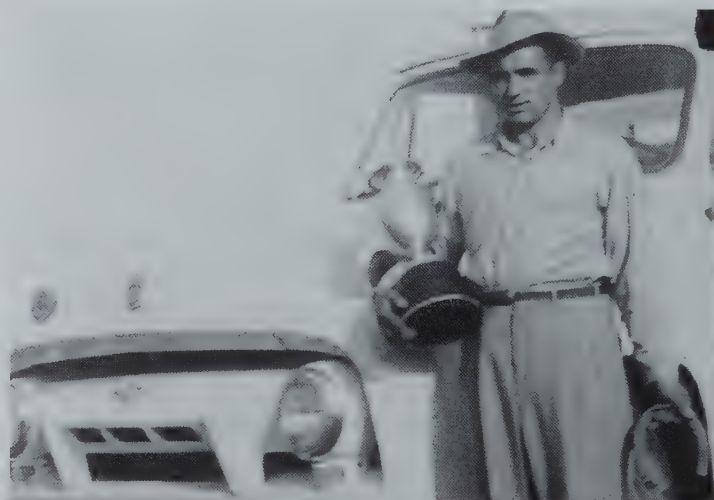
My father farmed south of Morinville at the end of the old Highway #2. In 1944 he bought a quarter of land from Mrs. Hess. In the 1940's and 50's my father worked as an underground miner to supplement his little farm.

In March of 1985 he was killed in a farm accident and in the same year my brother Laurent was killed in a car accident. My brother Lionel is in the bee business, Patrick is retired and is traveling around in a fifth wheel. I am retired and living with my wife Janice on an acreage on the quarter that belonged to my father. We have four sons: Chris, Tracey, Corey, and Jamie.

Tracey is married to Danielle (Desjardins), lives in Calgary and they have a little daughter, Alexandra, making us proud grandparents. Corey lives in Toronto and Chris and Jamie both reside in Edmonton.



The Maurice Durand Family, 1954. L to R: Lionel, Maurice, Patrick, Cecile, Raymond and Laurent.



Maurice Durand with the winning cup at the Sandy Lake Horseshoe Tournament, 1954



Maurice and Cecile Durand – circa 1980

Dvernychuk, Donald

Submitted by Donald Dvernychuk

I moved to Alcomdale on May 2, 1959 with my parents, Michael and Catherine, and my brothers, David and Daniel. Dad had purchased the Lipke General Store renaming the store Michaels General Store. I was 11 years old, David was eight and Daniel was six years old.

We attended Alcomdale School for the first two years and then transferred to St. Charles School.

At the age of 17, I moved to Edmonton to go to work.

In September 1970 I married Judy-Ann Prociuk from Barrhead. We have two children, Dean and Shelley. Dean is an electrician with Epcor and Shelley is in sales with Pickseed Canada.

In 1974 I pursued a career in heavy-duty mechanics and have been with the City of Edmonton for the past 25 years. I have two more years before retiring from the City. Judy-Ann retired two years ago from TELUS after working for 21 years with the company.

Judy-Ann and I still reside on the same acreage since June 1978 where we raised our children. We live by North Cooking Lake. We enjoy camping, fishing and travelling.

I have many happy memories while attending St. Charles School. I really enjoyed being taught by Sister Petra and Sister Adela. One of my memories while attending St. Charles School was actually being framed by a window. While standing by a window in the school basement, the wind blew it open, and it crashed over my head. The glass broke and the wooden window frame landed right over me. Everyone had a good laugh and joked around how I literally got framed that day.

Thank you for all the memories

Dwyer, Joe & Myra (Brenneis)

I, Myra, was born on June 30, 1960. My parents are Oliver and Louise Brenneis. I attended St. Charles School from grades one to three. The school was then closed down and grade four to nine were completed at Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre. I graduated from Sturgeon High School at Namao. I was actively involved in school sports, hockey and softball. I went on to university to obtain my degree in education. I am currently employed by the Sturgeon School Board and teach at the Morinville Hutterite Colony.

On October 25, 1986 I married Joe Dwyer in Mearns. We live near Mearns and are members of St. Charles Parish. Joe has been actively involved in the Mearns and Riviere Qui Barre communities. He has coached many hockey teams and in 1994 he organized their first family hockey tournament in Riviere Qui Barre. Joe is employed by Fortis Alberta and works in Spruce Grove.



The Dwyer family. David and Myra, standing. Megan, Joe and Kellie, sitting

We have three children. Megan Louise was born February 11, 1988. She is currently in grade twelve at Sturgeon Composite High School. She is involved in 4-H as a junior club leader and enjoys playing sports like volleyball and soccer. Next year she will be attending Grant MacEwan College.

David Oliver was born on July 12, 1989. He is attending Sturgeon Composite High School in grade eleven. He is actively involved in hockey at the midget "A" level. He enjoys sledding and quading as his past time.

Kellie Ann was born on June 9, 1991. She is attending Camilla School in grade nine. She has been involved in ringette and now is involved in hockey and enjoys playing soccer for Riviere Qui Barre. She enjoys quading, hanging out with her friends and helping Grandpa on the farm in her spare time.

We live on an acreage near the family farm. We are happy to live in the Mearns area and believe it is a good area in which to raise a family.

Ellett, Edgar & Margaret

Submitted by daughter, Sharon Musey



Ellett Family, 1976. L to R: Mildred, Dorothy, Keith Ruth & Sharon;. Seated: Margaret & Edgar Ellett

Edgar and Margaret Ellett lived in the Mearns district for nearly 40 years and raised their family of four girls and one boy, Ruth, Dorothy, Keith, Mildred and Sharon, on the quarter section of land they bought when they first came to the area. Edgar was born and raised in the Sandy Lake district, southeast of Edmonton, where his parents farmed. Edgar's parents emigrated from England in the 1890's. Margaret's family emigrated from Iowa, USA in the early 1900's and they lived at Ellerslie, which was south of Edmonton. Ellerslie is now within the city limits.

Margaret attended Camrose Normal School and taught school for one year, then married Edgar. Margaret also played on a Women's hockey team and was invited to play with The Grads, a

championship women's basketball team in Edmonton.

In 1927 Ed purchased SW 22-56-26-W4th from Kenneth McLeod, a non-resident owner. There were about 25 acres of land broken, no buildings, and fences were negligible. Walter Ellett, Ed's brother, owned a quarter nearby and being able to share machinery and work together had some influence on choosing to settle here. In the early 1940's Ed bought SE 21-56-26-W4th from Ephriam Cloutier and Walter purchased the adjoining quarter. The Cloutier family moved to LacLaBiche.

There was a General Store and Post Office in Mearns 1½ miles north of us. Mail came on the passenger train from Edmonton. The store keepers/postmasters mentioned by Ed were Joe Ricard, Ike Houle, Emile Nobert, Joe Sagan and Dan Sheehan. Later our mail came by rural delivery from Morinville.

The original grain elevator in Mearns was built around 1925-26 and later bought by United Grain Growers. There was a butcher shop run by Spargo's in Alcomdale, five miles NW of us. Ed and Margaret also dealt with Labonte's Locker Plant in Morinville. Banking was done at the Royal Bank in Morinville. Cattle and hogs were marketed in Edmonton.

Later, Ed and Margaret raised turkeys for sale as well. They would work with Art and Jesse Gill and Alec and Ann Morrison and possibly Herb and Beatrice Wolfe. The men butchered the birds and the women picked the feathers. It is difficult to believe now, but at that time, in the early 1950's, the turkeys had their heads left on, wrapped in brown paper and tied with twine. That was how they were sold. And the intestines were intact as well. The birds were slaughtered one day (well into the night) and taken to the city very early the next morning. That was in mid December and we would do a bit of Christmas shopping and I would go for my eye check-up. Of course we lived so far from the city that we had to do everything in one day!

Ed and Margaret had a telephone in the early 1940's and Calgary Power electricity in the new home in 1950. The new home was built of cement blocks by August Pawelka. Jim Falls did some or all of the plumbing and possibly the wiring. Ed also did some of the carpentry work. The kitchen cabinets were built by Mike Fitzgerald. The area seemed to have quite a number of local tradesmen!

All five children attended Belle Valley School, which was two and a half miles SW of us. The four older children went to school at its original site and travelled by horse and cart or sleigh, walked or rode horseback. The building was later moved to Mearns

and the youngest daughter, Sharon, attended there. She rode the school bus driven by Dan Sheehan, and later Andre Boddez drove the high school bus to Riviere Qui Barre.

Ed and Margaret were very involved in the community. First, with the Alcomdale Community Association for dances at the hall, picnics and ball tournaments at the grounds, and with the Curling Club. Later, they were active members of the RQB Curling Club from the time it was built until they left the area. Ed was a 4-H Calf Club Leader for a number of years in Alcomdale.

Margaret was the Secretary-Treasurer of the Morinville Mutual Telephone Co. for 17 years until 1962 when she was unable to continue due to a stroke. She was given a plaque for her years of dedication and always displayed it proudly in their home. Archie Cameron was President in later years and Albert Wolfe was the Lineman. When we would come home from a dance or a picnic at Sandy Beach or other places, Margaret would empty her pockets or purse and set out several little stacks of money and scraps of paper with writing on them. People used to pay her what they owed on their phone bill when they saw her instead of driving to the farm. She would issue a receipt the next time she saw them. She commented that people must trust her because so many folks did it that way. Ed was also a member of the Morinville Lion's Club for many years. Events that I remember were the Sandy Lake picnics and the August corn roasts, ball tournaments and rodeos.

Edgar and Margaret sold their farm in 1967 to Harold and Phyllis Borle and retired to Devon, Alberta. Ed continued to work at farming by helping a nephew who farmed at Thorsby. He was about 80 when he stopped driving tractor. His hobby was refinishing old furniture and there are likely a number of pieces still in the area that Ed patiently worked on, making up a part that was missing or repairing the un-repairable. Ed also continued to curl in Devon. Margaret was unable to be very active but loved watching all sports on TV or in person. She loved company and looked forward to people dropping by. They both enjoyed visits from neighbours from the farm who kept in touch. At the Mearns Reunion in 2004 a number of people told me of the help and kindness received from Mom when they were in need. Our family appreciated hearing those stories.

Margaret died in August 1985 at the age of 79 and Edgar died in September 1990 at the age of 87.

Ruth married Kenn Imler and they lived in Estevan until 1970 when they moved to Calgary. They have four sons. Ruth died of cancer in 1992. Kenn lives in Balzac, Alberta.

Dorothy married Bruce Boothby and they lived in Cochrane, then Olds and are now retired in Calgary. They have two daughters.

Keith married Lorraine Heemeryck and they live in Edmonton. Keith worked for Everall Construction most of his working career. Keith and Lorraine have a son and a daughter. Keith passed away in 2007.

Mildred married Bill Netterfield and they have two daughters and a son. Bill died in 1976. Mildred married Ralph Pahl and they live in Calgary.

Sharon married Ben Musey and they live at Danbury, Saskatchewan. They have two sons and a daughter.

Musey, Sharon (Ellett)

I was the youngest child of Ed and Margaret Ellett and attended school in Mearns up to grade nine then continued to high school at Riviere Qui Barre, graduating in 1961.

I played softball for the St. Charles Saints for a few years, as pitcher, shortstop and fielder. I think Mr. Banack was the coach, although I don't really remember anyone coaching us. I just assumed we knew what to do! I took music lessons from one of the Sisters and passed grade three piano. Then she was moved and my music career was put on hold until 1985 when our church organist moved away. I agreed to play the organ for a few months until someone permanent could be found. That was 20 years ago and I'm still waiting for my replacement!

My memories of school at Mearns are wonderful. I remember getting picked to go and pull dandelions from the Convent lawn. It was always a privilege to be allowed out of class to do chores for



Ben & Sharon (Ellett) Musey, 2002

the Sisters. And there was always a candy or special baked item as reward. They didn't realize that being 'picked' was the reward.

I also remember 'The' spring social event. During Easter holidays the girls in the Choir were given a party by the Sisters... held in the school, with food and music and games and fun. I'm not sure if this happened only one year or every year. As the only non-Catholic in the school, I was so happy and grateful to be included. I remember the excitement I experienced the days before... mainly worry it would snow or melt making the road impassable... and if Mom would have time to drive me up to Mearns. But everything worked out and we had a wonderful time.

After high school I worked in Edmonton for three years and in 1965 married an Air Force man from Saskatchewan. We lived in Newfoundland, until he left the Armed Forces. He went to work for Alberta Government Telephones for three years then the 'call of the land' pulled him back to Saskatchewan. We have been here since 1969 and are still farming. We have two sons and a daughter and six grandchildren. We live about 75 miles north of Yorkton and are 50 miles from the Manitoba border, if you ever want to drop in.

The Mearns Reunion was a once-in-a-lifetime journey back. It was interesting to compare memories and see how we recall events quite differently. Thanks to all those involved in putting it together. We all had something to think about all winter.

Ellett, Walter & Mary Family

Submitted by children Jim and Louise Rannard (Ellett)

Walter Ellett's parents settled on their South Edmonton farm in 1895 having moved from London, England. They raised registered Aberdeen Angus cattle there for over 50 years and won the Alberta Master Farmer award.

Walter bought his farm two miles south of Mearns in 1926 and began his herd of purebred Angus there.

In January of 1928 Walter married Mary Mayor who was born in England and moved to Edmonton with her family as a young girl. Mary worked as a secretary in an Edmonton bank before her marriage.

Walter and Mary had one son, Jim, born on December 30, 1928 and one daughter, Louise, born on May 4, 1931.

Walter worked for the Municipality of Morinville for many years as a weed inspector and field supervisor and was very active in the Lions Club and the Morinville Curling Club.

There are memories of the hungry thirties that include hand-me-down clothing, very little money to spend and raising most of the food. At one point during that time the price for a dozen eggs was the same as a three-cent postage stamp.

The homestead was named Belle View and was just one mile from the Belle Valley School.

Jim and Louise would take turns riding a horse pulling the other on a set of skis at the end of a 50-foot rope, sometimes at high speed. Open cutters and horse drawn cabins on runners (called a Caboose) were also used in the winter. In the spring and fall horse drawn buggies, democrats and homemade carts were used.



Walter, Mary, Jim & Louise Ellett beside their 1934 Chevrolet sedan at Belle View farm – circa 1943

Our first teacher was Alma Steffes, followed by her sister, Gertrude. Later on their cousins, Justine and Alice Hittinger, took on the teaching duties. Margaret Malendaine and Bernice Johnson also taught.

Walter Ellett's first challenge on the farm was the infestation of 'Ontario mustard', also called 'Charlotte mustard' and commonly called 'yellow mustard'. The only method of eradicating this noxious weed was to pull them up by hand, as chemical sprays were not developed yet. After twenty years of diligent effort there wasn't a mustard plant in sight on Walter's farm.

Louise and Jim remember the lamp lighting ceremony at home when they were children. "We would cover our eyes in the half dark evening while listening to Dad pump up the high-test gas lamp. After we heard the hiss of the lamp in full action we would uncover our eyes in glee as we experienced the brightly lighted room".



Louise & Jim Ellett – 1933 and 60 years later



Walter Ellett and grandsons, Fred & Rob Rannard at Walter and Mary's Fort Langley Angus Farm – 1970



1995 Ellett Family Reunion (100 years since grandparents, Charles and Amy Ellett's wedding). Back row: Jim's wife Elizabeth and daughter, Judy; Front row: Jim Ellett and his sister, Louise

He continued his herd of Angus at his Belle View farm for 35 years before moving to Fort Langley B.C. in 1962 where he again had his favourite 'Blacks' for ten years.

Sadly, Walter and Mary both passed away in August 1972.

Louise

Louise attended the Vermilion School of Agriculture 1948-1949 and the University of Alberta and spent five years teaching elementary school in Alberta plus three years in Vancouver. In 1959 she married Fred Rannard from Lethbridge. Fred and Louise have two sons and two grandchildren.

Jim

Jim attended the Vermilion School of Agriculture from 1948-1949. He then served as President of the junior branch of the Farmer's Union of Alberta and spoke to many communities around the province. He also farmed in partnership with his father on the family farm two miles south of Mearns until the fall of 1953.

Jim took a two-year course in Mechanical Engineering Technology at the Provincial Institute of Technology and Art (now SAIT) in Calgary 1953-1955. He won a scholarship for his second year from the Canadian Western Natural Gas Company. Since then he worked in the manufacturing sector of the Oil and Gas Industry and holds several U.S. and Canadian Patents on production equipment.

Jim and his wife Elizabeth have one son, four daughters, 23 grandchildren and 21 great-grandchildren.

Falls, Dave & Liz (White)

By Liz Falls

Monday, May 31st 1976 after rushing through security at Belfast Aldergrove airport I was now seated on a plane heading for London's Heathrow airport. I feasted my eyes on the beautiful green fields below. This past month had been hard on my mum as she was not in favor of me going to Canada. It was a sad parting saying goodbye to Mum and Dad, my sister Frances and my niece and godchild Nicole.

I was the youngest child of Bill and Frances White of 21 Andersonstown Park West Belfast, Northern Ireland. My mother was Irish Catholic and my father was a Protestant Ulsterman who became a convert before marrying my mum September 3rd, 1941. Their marriage was frowned upon even back then and many believed it would never last. I'm so very proud to say my parents were married fifty-seven years when my father passed away in 1998.

Growing up in Belfast was great. I had a happy childhood, being the youngest of five children. I attended St-Theresa's primary school and St-Genevieve's secondary school before attending The South Belfast Group School of Nursing in 1972 where I obtained a nursing diploma in 1975. Belfast had, however, become a war zone since the troubles began in August 1969 and it was a very scary and unsafe place to live. There were bombings, shootings and riots occurring on a daily basis. We had curfews and blackouts to keep people off the streets. The British army regularly patrolled in our neighborhood, which often gave rise to clashes on the streets. Barricades were erected to keep soldiers out but the army helicopters constantly hovered in the Belfast sky. Falling asleep at night to the sound of gunfire and explosions in the distance was common. Life was anything but normal so to get away from it for while a girlfriend and I decided to go to Europe.

It was Christmas 1975 in Aga Galina, Crete where I met Dave Falls from Alcomdale, Alberta, Canada. He was the son of Jim and Alice Falls. It was a whirlwind romance. It didn't take us long to figure out that we were made for each other. Dave came to Belfast for Easter in 1976 to meet my parents. Everything went well until we announced that I was going to go to Canada to be with Dave. Despite my mother's protests and what seemed like insurmountable opposition I remained firm in my



Liz and Dave in Belfast, Ireland – April 24, 1976

commitment to go to Canada. Mum wasn't happy with my decision but she had to accept it. I explained that this was something I had to do and if by chance it was a mistake, then I would have to find that out for myself.

The journey to Edmonton via Toronto was long. I was both excited and nervous. As I visited with other passengers I began to feel somewhat alarmed when several people told me they had lived in Edmonton all their lives and had never heard of Alcomdale. I reassured them that Alcomdale was just on the outskirts of Edmonton, at least that is according to Dave Falls. Again my anxiety level was starting to rise but in my heart of hearts I had complete faith in Dave.

What a welcome I received in Edmonton! It felt so good to be together again. We drove home from the airport that night in Dave's black 1974 Dodge Challenger. He bragged a lot about that car when I met him in Europe. I couldn't quite figure out why all the fuss, it seemed pretty ordinary to me. We seemed to be driving for a very long time. I noticed the city lights were far behind us and only darkness loomed ahead. The road was really weird, very rocky, bumpy, noisy and dusty. When I inquired, "Where is Alcomdale anyway?" Dave grinned and replied, "See those three lights way off in the distance, that's Alcomdale."

By the time we arrived in Alcomdale it was almost midnight. I was enthusiastically greeted by Dave's parents Jim and Alice, his younger brothers Ron and Lorne, and his little sister Marilyn. We sat around the kitchen table visiting and drinking tea. I really enjoyed being with them. I didn't realize it then but they were to become my new family and I would grow to love each and everyone of them as much as my own family in Ireland.

My first morning in Canada, Dave couldn't wait to give me the tour of Alcomdale. Being a city girl myself, I of course had to be properly dressed for the occasion. I showered, did my hair and make up, put on my lipstick and of course my high-heeled platform shoes. The tour took all of five minutes. I stumbled my way around the gravel roads past Lister's store, the post office, the fertilizer office and the warehouse and returned home by way of the Alcomdale honey plant. I had no idea I was coming to such a small place in the middle of nowhere. I thought Alcomdale was just on the edge of Edmonton. I started to feel a bit anxious but I didn't want to over-react. Dave and I were together and for now that's all that mattered. I figured there had to be a bus stop close by so I asked Dave, and to my horror and disappointment he shook his head, "There are no bus stops in Alcomdale." I was in disbelief. There are no bus stops! It was outrageous. What kind of place was this Alcomdale?

Over the next few months I got to know the Falls family. Alice was a devoted wife and mother and she was a great cook. She was very easy to get along with. She was patient, kind and loving. She had a huge heart. She was very proud of her family and made me feel like part of the family right from the start. Often when I felt lonely and home sick, together Jim and Alice comforted me. Although I was a registered nurse in Ireland I could not work in Canada. I did not have a work visa and Alberta did not recognize my qualifications. Some days were longer than others. Father Hugh Roche, the parish priest at that time, gave me a job. Jim drove me to the Villeneuve rectory every weekday so I could make Father Roche his evening meal. I was thrilled to have something to do and delighted to have a little cash of my own.



Michael, Lynn and Gary Falls – Christmas 1982

July 12, 1976 Dave and I got engaged. Jim subdivided the farm property when we bought a used mobile home and had it moved onto the home quarter just south of the farmhouse. January 29, 1977 we were married at St-Emerence Church, R.Q.B. Our daughter Lynn Frances was born on our first wedding anniversary. Michael Joseph was born 2 years later on January 8, 1980 and our youngest, Gary Denis, was born February 27, 1981. Jim and Alice moved into a new house in the town of Alcomdale, November 1981. It was then that Dave and I moved into the farmhouse where we continue to live until this day. We did a big renovation on the house in 2000 so it continues to serve our family needs very well when we get together to celebrate Christmas, Easter, birthdays and other special events.



Gary Falls, Jason Kluthe, Lynn Kluthe, Mike, Dave and Liz Falls – Photo taken August 23, 2003

Our daughter Lynn married Jason Kluthe, son of Larry and Joanne Kluthe. Lynn and Jason live in St. Albert. Lynn teaches at St-Edmund's Catholic School in Edmonton. Lynn and Jason just welcomed their little baby boy Ethan Joseph into their lives March 25, 2008. Two days after the joy and blessing of this new life our family had to grieve the loss of Dave's youngest brother, Ron Falls, who died suddenly March 27th when caught in an avalanche in Blue River, British Columbia while snowmobiling.

Michael Joseph Falls lives in St. Albert but is presently building a new home in Calahoo. Mike runs his own framing company called MJF Developments. He did a large portion of the work at

the West Country Hearth Seniors Residence at Villeneuve. Mike is engaged to Amanda Winichuk, daughter of Wayne and Debbie Winichuk of Edmonton.

Gary Denis Falls lives in Dover Estates, Calahoo. He is married to Heidi Clark, daughter of Peter and the late Helen Clark originally from Scotland. They have two girls, Brooke Helen born November 26, 2003 and Peyton Eve born November 26, 2006. Gary operates Capital Contracting and does most of his work locally.

Dave works in commercial construction in Edmonton. We holiday in the winter months. We love to travel and of course visit family in Ireland. I started working at the old Immaculata Hospital in Westlock in 1985. I still work almost full time as a R.N at the Westlock Health Care Centre. I received my Bachelor of Nursing from Athabasca University in 2002.

Almost thirty-two years have passed since I arrived in Canada. The time has flown by. Much has changed but some things remain the same. There are still no bus stops in Alcomdale. We no longer have a store or a honey plant but Falls Fertilizers still exists. Jim and Alice moved to St. Albert Mission Hill Village two years ago but Alice passed away suddenly August 5, 2007. Her passing has left a huge void in our family. Alice was the matriarch of the family. She was the glue that kept us all together. She was the organizer, the kin keeper, the planner and social convener. Alice always had things under control. She was kind, thoughtful and patient. She loved everyone and everyone loved her. We miss her very much.

Now I know what kind of a place Alcomdale is. It is a great place to raise kids. It has become my home away from home for thirty years now. It was here I became a member of the Falls family, a family that I am proud of and honored to be a part of. Alcomdale is country living at its best. At night I fall asleep to the sound of crickets or cows mooing in the distance and I awaken to birds singing and to another new day in the hamlet of Alcomdale. Life is good here.

Thankfully Alcomdale was not a mistake for that high-spirited little Belfast girl who set out in high-heeled platform shoes thirty years ago. Besides

that, I'm so glad that Alcomdale isn't just on the outskirts of Edmonton.

Falls, Jim & Alice

By Jim and Alice

Jim and Alice were married on November 18, 1948. We had nine children: Maureen born in 1949, Dennis born in 1951, Evelyn born in 1953, Dave born in 1955, Diane born in 1956, Rick born in 1957, Lorne born in 1960, Ron born in 1963 and Marilyn born in 1964.

We lived on a farm in the Riviere Qui Barre district until we moved to Alcomdale in 1967.

We purchased the Spargo business in 1964 and the whole family became involved in the fertilizer operation.

The summer of 1970 brought tragedy to our family when we lost Dennis and Evelyn in a car accident. With the help of our faith and friends we survived a very difficult time in our lives.

Our children are grown now:

- Maureen married Bert Olsen and has three children, Craig, Janice & Josh. Craig is married to Sue Kennitt and they have two children, Kelsie and Ryley. Janice married John Day and they have three children, Meagan, Alyssa and Evan.
- Dave married Elizabeth (Liz) White from Belfast, Ireland and has three children, Lynn, Mike and Gary. Lynn married Jason Kluthe. Gary married Heidi Clark and they have two children, Brooke and Peyton.
- Diane married John Hooke and has two children, Shawn and Kevin.



Jim and Alice Falls Family – circa 1964/1965. Back row: Marilyn, Evelyn, Maureen, Ron, Denis, Dave. Front row: Lorne, Rick, Diane



Jim and Alice Falls' 50th Wedding Anniversary – 1998. Dianne, Lorne, David, Marilyn, Alice, Jim, Maureen, Ron and Rick

- Rick married Wendy Wagner and has four children, Kane, Dexter, Coral and Rory.
- Lorne married Diane Kieser.
- Ron married Diane Banks and has two children, Sheyanne and Jessie
- Marilyn married Kevin Sommer and has three children, Marisa, Chantal and André.

We are very proud of each and every one of our family and neighbors and enjoyed many years of happiness in the Alcomdale and Mearns area.

We have now moved to St. Albert for our retirement and hope to welcome each and every one of you in our new home.

Sadly, since the writing of this story, Alice passed away on August 5, 2007 at the age of 79.

Falls, Leo & Rachel



Leo and Rachel Falls were married on St. Patrick's Day 1994

Brian and Annie Falls purchased a quarter of land (NW 4-56-26-W4) in December 1909 from Alfred Cyre. Brian Falls moved west from a dairy farm in Frampton, Quebec, twenty-miles south of Quebec City.

Uncle Dan came west in 1906 and worked the harvest excursion in Manitoba, and he also worked at the Cardiff Coal Mine until it was closed by a strike.

Then Joe, my dad, came west with brothers Tom and Dan. All came to farm the new land one mile west of Fitzgeralds, Sheehans and the Redmonds, who were all from Frampton, Quebec. In 1922,

Joe Falls married Annie Donahue, thus siblings Angela, Jim, Lewis and Leo, whom all eventually married.

I married Rachel (Labonte) Bouvier at the ripe old age of 60 years on March 17, 1994 and inherited three daughters, two sons, thirteen grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Rachel and I, with our boat and fifth wheel, enjoy fishing in Northern Alberta, Saskatchewan and Prince Rupert. We have also traveled to the Yukon, where two sons live, in Whitehorse, Alaska, Queen Charlotte Islands, the interior of British Columbia and Michigan.

I went to school in Mearns, tutored by great teachers, Alice and Justin Hittinger, Sister Mary Edward and Sister Clarice. Jack Stevens and I walked to our south corner (which was one mile for Jack and three quarters of a mile for me) to be picked up by our dependable bus driver, Dan Sheehan. Dan had many miles of rugged winter and summer roads to navigate. I completed grade nine at Mearns School and moved on to St. Anthony's College in North Edmonton for two years. My last year was at St. Joseph's High School in Edmonton.

Rachel and I are retired. We still live on the quarter of land that was purchased in 1909.

Falls, Ron and Diane (Banks)

By Diane

Ron was born February 7, 1963 and lived NW 4-56-26-W4 until 1963 when his family moved to the farm at NW32-56-26-W4, just south of Alcomdale. Ron was the second youngest child of nine children. Ron went to Camilla School in



Ron and Diane Falls – Photo taken November 2007

Riviere Qui Barre from grades one to nine, then he went to Sturgeon Composite High School.

While growing up Ron and his brothers helped their dad, Jim, do the farming and what ever work needed to be done. Ron loves dirt bikes, quads, hockey, playing cards, crib games, camping, seadoos, snowmobiling and hanging out with his friends and family. Family was very important to Ron, and kids were always attracted to him. His nieces and nephews and friends were always around him.

Ron took over his dad's business in 1993, Falls Fertilizer. Ron was very supportive in the local community and surrounding area. Ron runs the Alcomdale water cooperative that his dad started in 1982. Ron has been a long time member of the Alcomdale Community League, supportive of Riviere Qui Barre hockey and community. He supports Busby Lions, Fish and Game, and Busby Gymkhana.

I, Diane (Banks), was born October 28, 1956 in Wainwright, Alberta. My Dad, Stan Banks, was in the army.

I graduated from Victoria Composite High School, Edmonton, Alberta in 1974. I took a Business Administration course at Alberta Vocational College in Edmonton and graduated in July 2005. I got an excellent job at Sturgeon County in Morinville where I worked for 13 years. I have been working with Ron since 2000.

My parents, Margaret and Melvin Leitheiser live in Westlock, Alberta.

I had two children; Sheyanne Autumn Levall born on October 17, 1977 and Jessie Collin Levall born on January 20, 1980.

Ron and I started dating in 1985 and we married on August 6, 1988 at Mearns, Alberta.

We made our home on the farm Ron grew up on, we bought a brand new mobile home, then in 1996, we decided to build a house. It took three months from start to finish, lots of rain, but what an exciting experience.

Since about 1981, Sheyanne and Jessie would compete at the Busby Gymkhana Club.

Sheyanne went to play school and kindergarten at Busby School. Then she graduated to grade one where Doris Meinczinger was her teacher. She went to grade nine at Camilla School, Riviere Qui Barre, then finished grade 12 at Sturgeon Composite High School at Namao. Sheyanne attended NAIT where she took Business and graduated with a Marketing Degree. She now manages the Union Hall in Edmonton, their first girl manager. Way to go my girl!

Jessie started and finished school in Camilla School, then finished his grade 12 at Sturgeon Composite High School. Jessie went to NAIT where he obtained his Journeyman Ticket in Welding. He has his own Welding truck and is doing very well. He also went to Texas A&M University in Texas where he graduated with his Firefighter Training, so hopefully he will get on with the City of Edmonton Firefighters. All he has to do is make it past the interview, hee hee.

Ron and I gained someone new in our family. On September 8, 2007, Jessie married Chantille Maria Hutchings. What a beautiful girl. You know what's next; grandchildren . . . Jessie and Chantille are building a house in Morinville, starting in April 2008. Hopefully they will like to come and live out here on the farm at Alcomdale.



Jesse Levall and Chantille (Hutchings) on their wedding day - September 8, 2007

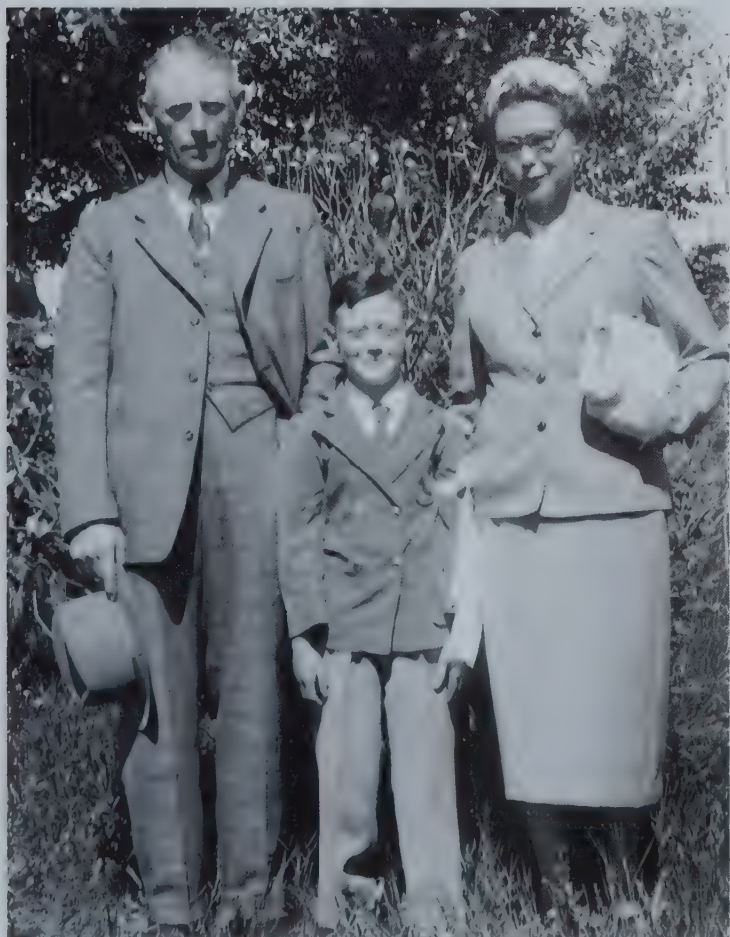
Claire Stitsen had asked me Christmas of 2006 if I would be interested in typing some stories for people for this book. I probably typed a couple hundred stories, so I thought I'd better start writing something about us. I wish I had said more but I've only touched the tip of iceberg of what we are really about. Ron is not one to talk about what he has done or cared about.

It is now April 2008. Ron was in Blue River, British Columbia snowmobiling on March 27, 2008, when he was caught in an avalanche, in an area called "Paradise". He and his machine were buried 10 feet under the snow and he was crushed in the chest by his machine. The two guys with him, Peter Gadoury and Grant Truckey, firefighters from the City of Edmonton, dug for 45 minutes to reach him and worked on him for an hour. Ron died doing what he loved, in "Paradise".

Fitzgerald, Dennis & Lil

By Dennis Fitzgerald

My ancestors on my dad's side left County Carlow in Southeastern Ireland and landed at Quebec on May 17, 1820. They settled in Frampton, south of Quebec City. A couple of generations later my grandfather, James, married Mary Ann (Cullen) Sheehan, a widow with three young boys, Frank,



The Fitzgerald family in 1952

Herbert and Pat. James and Mary Ann had another six children, one of which was my dad, Michael. By the turn of the century, land had become impossible to obtain for expansion so, rather than see their children have to eventually move away, James Fitzgerald decided to take the entire family west to Alberta. In the spring of 1907 they auctioned off all their belongings and boarded the train west. They settled where I grew up on the SE¼ 9-56-26-W4, right across the road from the Sheehan family who arrived the same year.

My mother's family, the McNamaras, had taken a different route from Ireland, settling in Kansas on their way to our area. My grandfather, Tom, married Elizabeth Kinsella and had three children, the oldest of which was Margaret, born in 1907. At that time, the Shamrock Hotel in Riviere Qui Barre belonged to Mom's grandfather. These were typical of the people who arrived to populate this area.

At the end of WWII my father married Margaret McNamara, a nurse who had grown up in Riviere Qui Barre and was nursing in Edson. Since they were no 'spring chickens' there was no time to lose; I was born a day before their first anniversary. Now you know why I'm an only child. I'm lucky to be here at all!

I was lucky to grow up in this area and to have spent most of my life on Range Road 263, although we didn't always call it that. It had many names, some of which I cannot repeat here, such as when we were stuck in the spring gumbo or shovelling our way through a March blizzard! Many of my classmates from St. Charles in Mearns and later, Camilla in Riviere Qui Barre have stayed in or returned to the area and become lifelong friends.

I went to St. Charles School in Mearns for four years. Being an only child, school meant seeing kids every day, riding on the bus, recesses and noon hours... there was so much time to talk and play. I thought it was heaven! My nickname was Fish in the Barrel (their way of saying Fitzgerald). I wasn't wild about it but I guess it helped to toughen me up. I left St. Charles to go to Camilla School when I was nine so I never did get to be one of the 'big kids', as we called them.

I have a few precious memories of my days in Mearns, most of which seem to involve me being a bit 'naughty'. One is of Marcel Boddez and me sneaking a cigarette in the basement washroom of the main school, which meant we were either in grade one or two!

Another is showing Sister Henrietta the lining of my overall pocket when it was 'handkerchief and fingernail check time'. Sneaking out of the grade four portable we called the 'chicken-coop' during class was another trick of ours. When our teacher



The Fitzgerald family in 2007

Mrs. Clark was busy with another group, we would make our escape out the low west windows. The only thing we didn't count on during our marble game was the fact the Principal could look down from her classroom window and see us up to our shenanigans.

Another of my memories is, as a consequence, staying in at recess! The sisters were always firm but fair in instilling morals and family values in their students. Playing 'crack the whip' on the rink at noon hour was a winter favorite as was 'pom-pom-pull-away'. Softball, marbles, and tag were great warm weather pastimes.

In 1967 I married Liliane Rochon who was in Edmonton studying to be an X-Ray Technician. Her parents were Noe and Luce (Maurier) Rochon, farmers from Girouxville in the Peace Country. We had met when our first cousins, Ed Maurier and Sheila McGillis married a couple of years earlier. We lived in Edmonton for the first few years after our marriage. By this time, Lil was employed as an X-Ray Tech in the Tegler Building downtown. After graduating from the University of Alberta in 1968, I taught for seven years in Sturgeon School Division and the remainder of my 30 years in three St. Albert Schools.

We lived in Edmonton when our first son, Sean, was born on February 14, 1970. Two years later we built our house on the NE 9-56-26-W4, south of Mearns, where we still reside today. We had two more sons, Brendan born December 2, 1973 and Scott, born February 17, 1978.

My lifelong love of sports, baseball in particular, began in Mearns where I played for the first year or two before playing for Riviere Qui Barre. It was a relaxed atmosphere, as I recall, with the odd outfielder even having time to pick flowers during games. Our sons inherited this love for sports and we have spent countless hours through the last few

decades travelling to and cheering at baseball and hockey games across our province and country.

As of 2005, our three sons are all married. Sean married Kim Buzak in 2002. They have an eighteen-month old son, Liam, and reside in St. Albert. The same summer Brendan married Leah Teasdale. They live in Edmonton and have a family of three, Leah's 15 year-old-daughter, Kirstin, an eighteen-month old son, Noah, and a new baby named Callum.

Scott married Kristin Harris in 2005 and they have recently moved to Kelowna, British Columbia. We are blessed to be so close to our grandchildren and see them every chance we get! They are the joy of our lives!

In 1998 I retired from teaching and realized my dream of raising buffalo. Throughout the summer our weekends are spent selling our bison meat at Farmer's Markets in St. Albert and Edmonton. Lil works at the Sturgeon Hospital in St. Albert in the Ultrasound Department and enjoys meeting many local friends and neighbors as patients. We have had a very fulfilling life so far, and we hope that our children and grandchildren will be as blessed as we have been.

Friedrich, Alfons & Regina

By the family

Alfons was born in Prolsdorf, Germany (Bavaria) in 1904. He came from a family of twelve. He immigrated to Canada in 1928, sponsored by a Saskatchewan farmer. He had to work for the farmer until his fare was paid and any expenses that were incurred. Alfons met Regina Kampert in Regina, Saskatchewan. Regina was born in Romania in 1910 and came to Canada in 1926.

Alfons and Regina were married in Edmonton's Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church on January 15, 1933. After his marriage, Alfons went to Chicago, Illinois to get a brew master degree. While he was there his first son, Otto, was born on his grandparents farm in Saskatchewan on December 13, 1933. When Alfons returned, they moved to Edmonton where they made their home. He became brew master at SICKS Brewery, now Molson's House on 104th Avenue. They lived in the house that belonged to the brewery.

On November 30th, 1935, a second son, Richard, was born.



Alfons & Regina Friedrich, married Jan. 15, 1933

In February of 1938 a farm was purchased NW of Edmonton from Sam Walters, NE 24-56-27-W4th, which was mostly bush. This quarter had a small three-room shack, which they lived in until 1942 when a new house was built. Alfons proceeded to clear the land with an ax, grub hoe and a team of horses. He seeded a forty-acre field to wheat, which, when harvested and sold, he was able to purchase his first tractor, a Cockshutt 70, with tiptoe steel



Otto Friedrich on binder, with Richard driving "Tiptoe" steel wheel tractor (their first tractor) – circa 1945

wheels. To help make ends meet during the winter months, Alfons would chop firewood and sell it to the schools for the wood stoves used for heating the school. He cut and sold 'timbers' to the coalmines, which used them for supports in the mineshafts.



Threshing on the Friedrich farm

Harvesting was done with 'threshing crews' where all the neighbours got together and helped each other. During those days Regina would have all the chores to do as well as make hot meals three times a day and snacks for the morning and afternoon lunch break. She also did the stooking when their crop was cut with the binder. When the combines came on the scene it was a great time saver!

To help out financially, Regina would grow a huge garden. She would trade her garden produce with Armand Chalifoux, who had a general store in Morinville, for the grocery staples of flour, sugar, salt, coffee, etc... that she needed. Guess this was called bartering! This trade of goods was done when Mr. Chalifoux delivered the mail to the rural areas bi-weekly.

Two more quarters were purchased, one from George Timney SE 24-56-27-W4th and the other from Philip Poutre NW 18-56-26-W4th.

In July of 1946 a daughter, Margaret, was born to Regina and Alfons to complete their family.



Friedrich Family – 1993. Alfons & Regina on their 60th Wedding Anniversary. Back row: Otto, Margaret and Richard



Alfons Friedrich shown with some of his "willow weaving" creations

Alfons and Regina were very active members of the community, supporting and working for St. Charles Parish. Alfons helped build the curling rink in Alcomdale and was a very active participant and supporter of the game. Regina belonged to the CWL in Mearns and the Independence WI and actively supported these organizations.

In 1965 Alfons and Regina built a new home in Edmonton and sold the home quarter to son, Richard.

While living their retirement years in Edmonton, Alfons spent all his time cutting and peeling willows for his hobby of weaving wicker furniture, baskets, hampers, fern stands and many other items. Many reading this story will have items made by him! Another favourite pastime of Alfons's was working the fund raising bingos at his church, St. Edmunds Parish.

Regina was in charge of sales and distribution of Alfons's wicker creations. This she enjoyed very much, as it kept her in touch on the phone and in person with many friends and neighbours. She loved visiting with people. Other favourite pastimes of Regina's were looking after and visiting with her grandchildren, quilting, paper-tole, making afghans and many other crafts.

Regina passed away in August of 1994 and Alfons in December of 1998.

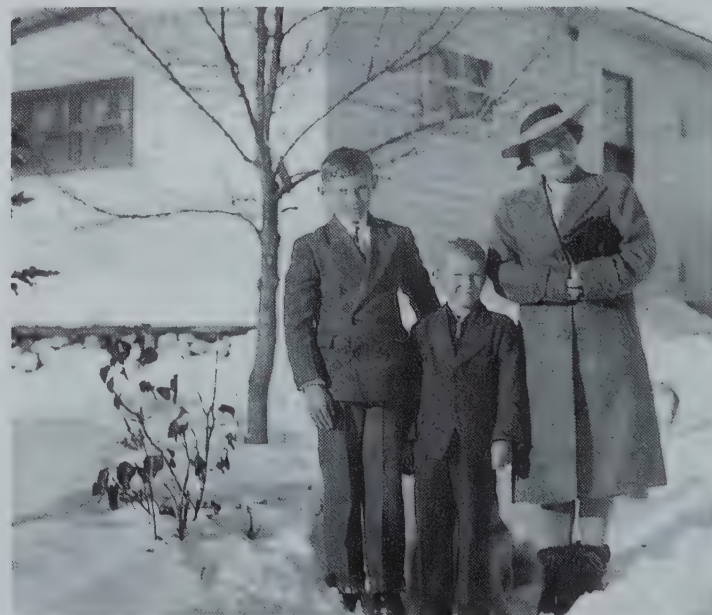
Friedrich, Otto & Mary

By Otto Friedrich

I was born on a farm by Quinton, Saskatchewan

on December 13, 1933. After my father Alfons graduated from the University in Chicago with a Brew Masters Degree, we moved to Edmonton and lived in a home at the corner of 104 Avenue and 121 Street, the residence for the SICKS Brewery. In this home I remember we had an icebox for a fridge. One time I disappeared from home and my mother and a friend found me riding my tricycle down between the tracks with a streetcar behind me on 124th Street.

In 1938 we moved to a farm northwest of Edmonton, NE 24-26-27-W4th. Our home was an old house with a leaking roof. Many times when it



House on Friedrich farm with "leaky roof". Otto, Richard, Regina Friedrich

rained pails were put all over the house to catch the water coming in, even over my bed!

In 1942 we winched the old house from its location with a stump puller and one horse so that our new home could be built there. The basement was dug using horses with a slip.

That summer, at the age of nine years old, I started to drive a Cockshutt 70 tractor, disking and harrowing the summer fallow while my Dad worked on building our new home. That fall Dad hitched the tractor onto the binder and kept me home from school to drive the tractor while he rode the binder to cut his crop. There were many sudden fast starts, with Dad doing backward cartwheels off the binder seat. In 1949 we had 50 acres of Victory Oats on new land. My brother Richard and I would cut the oats and Dad could not keep up with us, stooking!

I started school in 1940 at Bamill, at first walking the two and a half miles. Later I went by horse and buggy in the summer and by homemade sleigh in the winter. The first horse I had was named Lily, and a later one was named Buck. Then I went by bus to Alcomdale and finished grade eleven. In the fall of 1951, I went to Victoria High School in Edmonton and received my grade twelve diploma.

June 30, 1952, I started a job at Canada Packers in the mechanical maintenance department. I achieved Welders First Class in 1955, Pressure Vessels in 1956, Millwright in 1964 and was then promoted to maintenance supervisor in 1965 and held this job until 1991. I was with Gainers for another five years and retired in 1996. Now I have a hobby, woodworking, making furniture and cabinets for our home and for family and friends.



Otto Friedrich Family – circa 1998. L to R: Otto, Mary, Ken, Charlene & Tina

On October 29, 1955 I married Mary Lachotkievich from Calahoo. We had four children; Tina, a physiotherapist in Edmonton; Kenneth, a

mechanical engineer for the City of Edmonton; Perry, deceased, and Charlene, a nurse in Phoenix, Arizona. We have three grandchildren.

We lived in Edmonton from 1951 to 1984, Winnipeg 1984 to 1987, Red Deer 1987 to 1992, and St. Albert from 1992 to the present.

Friedrich, Richard & Marion

By Richard Friedrich

In the Misericordia Hospital in Edmonton on November 30, 1935, I was born to Regina and Alfons Friedrich. We lived in Edmonton in a house owned by the SICKS Brewery, as my father was employed as brew master at the brewery. I lived there with my family until I was two years old. In February of 1938 my family purchased a quarter of land NE 24-56-27-W4th and we moved onto this farm, where I still reside today. The reason for the move was because the war was imminent and we were German.



Transportation to Bamill School with horse and cutter, 1940's Otto and Richard Friedrich

For the first five years of my schooling I went to Bamill School. There were three students in my grade one class, one skipped a grade and one failed, therefore I was the only student in my grade for the next four years. Otto and I went to school by horseback. We rode the same horse bareback. In winter we went by horse and cutter. During the war years our teachers were high school girls who had very little training.

When I was eight years old I got pneumonia very bad and spent weeks in the hospital. The treatment at that time was mustard plasters, as there were no antibiotics. At this same time my father was sick in bed with hiccups, so my mother had to look after him and myself and do all the chores as well. It was a difficult time for all.

For grade six it was on to Alcomdale, the New England School. This was very different for me, as I had other students in my grade! But the competition was good, as it made me a better student. This is

when Tom Nisbet and I went to school together. Tom and his wife Myrna are great friends today. I went to grade eleven (grade 12 was not available) and then I quit school to help my father on the farm. My dream was to be a medical doctor.

Our transportation to Alcomdale School was a homemade bus. It was converted from a cattle truck and had benches inside for us to sit on. When the bus got stuck in the wintertime, our driver Mr. Alan Mills had us get out and use a rope to pull the bus out of the snow or mud.

Some of my memories from Alcomdale were making a skating rink by hauling water with barrels on a stone boat.

I was a member of the Alcomdale 4-H Beef and Grain Club for several years. I took first prize once with a very high-spirited calf.

Baseball was one of my passions. The Alcomdale baseball team took up most of my free time during the 1950's. We played in a league with Pickardville, Vimy, Busby and Legal twice a week. In tournaments, at Sunday picnics, we also played against Alexander, Morinville, Riviere Qui Barre and Villeneuve. I coached the Mearns softball team for a couple of years.

I always looked forward to the annual Mearns Church picnic, which was held on Father's Day every year. For spending money my father gave each of us a dollar bill to spend on anything we wanted, including the dinner served in the church basement which was a chicken supper put on by the parish ladies. I always remember the smell of the lilacs that decorated the tables! Another memory of the parish is that we always had two weeks of catechism classes each summer taught by nuns that Father Merchant would have come out to teach us.

In 1953 I enrolled at the Vermilion School of Agriculture where I spent two years. Here we had a great social life, which sometimes took priority over our classes. One subject we studied was "How to take care of workhorses", as combines just came into standard use on the prairies but it was the consensus that farmers could not farm without 'straw stacks'! Even with all the social life, I still managed to receive a scholarship for General Proficiency. We lived in a dormitory with strict rules – no alcohol, no girls (even



Richard Friedrich was a student at Vermilion School of Agriculture – Graduated in 1955

though there was a girls section in the dormitory) and no going home on weekends, as we were expected to take part in activities at the college. I had a great two years and made many great friends. In June of 2005 I went back for my 50th Anniversary and renewed acquaintances with old school buddies. Boy, they sure changed – they somehow got older!!

I started my farming career after college, working with my father, with the purchase of a half section of land from Don Rye, W¹/₂ of 24-56-27-W4th. In 1957 we built a hog barn from lumber that I cut and brought home from Calling Lake on a farmers timber birth. The lumber was hauled home with many loads on our Ford two-ton truck. The lumber was in the 'rough' stage and was planed at home. The barn was 34 feet by 80 feet, which we started building in the fall of 1956 and finished in the summer of 1957. We then began raising hogs full time.

In June of 1959, I met Marion Bokenfohr who lived in the Volmer area. She went to high school in St. Albert and it was at a Prom dance that I asked her for our first date. On our second date I went to Jasper to see Marion, as she was working for her father who owned Pyramid Lake Motel in Jasper National Park. This was the first time I saw the awesome Rocky Mountains.

In winter of 1959-1960, I worked at a small sawmill by Cynthia for \$1.00 per hour, out of which I had to pay for my meals and slept in a skid shack.

Marion and I dated for two years and we were married in November of 1961. I purchased a new car for \$2,100.00 a few weeks before we got married. We took the car on a one-month honeymoon to California and got into Tijuana, Mexico. Our motel bills averaged \$6.11 per night and breakfasts for the two of us cost under \$1.00. Total cost for our honeymoon, which included family Christmas gifts, was \$611.00 for four weeks!



Richard & Marion (Bokenfohr) Friedrich, married Nov. 16, 1961

EMPLOYEE (MR., MRS., MISS; FIRST NAMES FOLLOWED BY SURNAME; FULL ADDRESS WITH PROVINCE) EMPLOYÉ (M., Mme., Mlle; prénoms suivis du nom de famille; ADRESSE COMPLÈTE, PROVINCE)				NAME AND ADDRESS OF EMPLOYER NOM ET ADRESSE DE L'EMPLOYEUR					
Richard Friedrich RR2. Morinville. Alta				O'Brien Sawmills Onoway Alta					

(A) UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE NO. N.I.L. Numéro d'assurance-chômage	(B) EXEMPTIONS PER TD1 1000 Exemptions suivant TD1	(C) MONTHS EMPLOYED 2 Mois d'emploi	(D) SALARY OR WAGES BEFORE DEDUCTIONS 285 60 Traitements ou salaires avant déductions	(E) COMMISSIONS — Commissions	(F) TAXABLE ALLOWANCES — Allocations imposables	(G) TAXABLE BENEFITS — Prestations imposables	(H) LUMP SUM PAYMENTS — Paiements forfaitaires	(I) DEDUCTIONS FOR REGISTERED PENSION FUND — Déductions pour fonds enregistré de pension	(J) INCOME TAX DEDUCTED 13 35 Impôt déduit sur le revenu
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Richard's T4-1960 slip for wages received at the sawmill in Cynthia, Alberta

We rented a half section of land from Mrs. Clarence Duncan. We remodeled the house there and put in the sewer and water. We kept hogs and milked cows on this farm, as well as keeping up farming with my father. In the fall of 1965, we purchased the home quarter from my father and moved into the house, as my parents had built a house in Edmonton and moved there. We took over the hogs, beef and milk cows. We continued to farm the land until spring of 2006 when we rented the land to Greg Kyle.

We purchased a quarter of land from Maurice Bugnet, NE 33-56-26-W4th in 1976.

In 1989 we built a new home on the home quarter, which we are enjoying every day.

- We have a family of five children
- Grant Henry, 1964
- Glen Alfons, 1966
- Lisa Maria, 1967
- Loran Jules, 1970
- Carol Lynn, 1973
- We have nine grandchildren.



Friedrich Family – Christmas 1999. Back row: Carol, Grant, Marion, Richard & Lisa. Front: Loran & Glenn

Our travels have taken us to: Israel and Egypt (this trip will always be our most memorable as to walk the land where Jesus walked was awesome); Greece and Turkey; Portugal (which included Fatima); Caribbean; Panama Canal and Alaska cruises; Mexico; many, many trips to the United States including the New England states during autumn with the spectacular colorful leaves; and Canada, where we have been in all the provinces, except Quebec.

I am in a Parkinson's study in New Haven Connecticut so have been there six times already. We spent one winter in Florida and two winters in California with our motor home. We do lots of flying to visit our children: Glenn in Houston, Texas; Loran and Erena and four granddaughters in Hillsboro (Portland) Oregon; and Carol and Fenton and two grandchildren in Vancouver.



Richard & Marion Friedrich – 45th Wedding Anniversary – Nov. 16, 2006

Life has been very good and God has blessed us in many ways and continues to bless us each and every day. We are so thankful for everything!

Friedrich, Grant & Stacey

By Grant Friedrich

I, Grant Friedrich, was born on June 17, 1964 in the old Edmonton Misericordia Hospital and was raised on the family farm near Mearns, NE 24-56-27-W4th. I am the first born of Richard and Marion Friedrich and my grandparents were Alphons and Regina Friedrich.



Stacy, Grant, Jessica and Justin Friedrich

My elementary school education I received at Riviere Qui Barre, being transported there by school bus. For my high school education I went to Sturgeon Composite High School at Namao.

For two summers I worked with bees looking after the beehives and extracting honey. At sixteen, I got a job with an electrical company, which took me to the Yukon Territories where the company was doing the electrical work on an airport runway. When I returned home I started working with a local company, Solid Wireline Services, which took me all over the province helping to service oil wells. Soon I was working full time for Solid, living in Whitecourt, Grande Prairie and Red Deer.

While working in Red Deer, I met my future wife Stacey McGregor. We were married in Red Deer on October 14, 1989. We gave our families two weeks notice for the wedding and everyone came!!!

February 15, 1990, our daughter Jessica Lynn was born – a very exciting and special event in my life. Two weeks after Jessica's birth we moved to Fort St. John, BC to run and operate the company business there. Then in April of 1991 we moved back to Solid Wireline's Morinville office and also

moved into the family home on the farm, as my parents had built a new house.

Justin Richard was born on September 4, 1991.

In the spring of 1996, I joined a new company, Remote Wireline, in which I am a shareholder and where I presently work.

In the summer of 2004 we purchased a home in Sturgeon View Estates, over by Namao. At the end of September we moved in and five days later the house was totally demolished by fire in the early hours of the morning. It was a devastating time for our family. We built a new house at the acreage and moved into it in April of 2006.



Grant Friedrich with daughter Jessica and son Justin in October 2007

At this time Jessica is in high school, she loves to play soccer and take part in drama and do any acting that she can. Justin loves to ride his motorbike and his dad's quad.

When I have time, I like to fish, hunt, ride motorbike, and travel. Stacey and I like to take Jessica and Justin on camping holidays with our fifth wheel.

Friedrich, Glenn Alphons

By Glen Friedrich

I was born in Edmonton on July 23, 1966, to Richard and Marion Friedrich and named after my grandfather, Alphons Friedrich, who started farming in the Mearns area in 1938. I was raised on the farm, but I wasn't destined to stay, although I'd have to say that my abilities as a farmer weren't the worst.

I graduated from Camilla Elementary, Riviere Qui Barre; Sturgeon Composite High School, Namao; the University of Alberta, Edmonton (B.Sc.) and Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX (Ph.D.). This took only 22 years and I can't say I know enough about much of anything. It was sufficient to qualify me as a scientist and that is what I do now. My field of research is biology in general and specifically genetics and molecular biology as it relates to human disease.

I spent some time in post-doctoral training in



by Sarah Williams, staff writer

Southampton resident Glenn Friedrich, who flies biplanes and other planes, is seen smiling in a photo taken with the West University Buzz. There is no technology or engine.

Glenn Friedrich on cover of local paper called West University Buzz in Houston, Texas – Summer of 2006

Seattle at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. Seattle is a great city in which to live and I hope to make it back there someday. After Seattle, in 1995, I joined in the startup of a biotechnology company called Lexicon Genetics based just outside of Houston. The company was founded by colleagues from Baylor and I was asked to be the first employee. I had been with the company for four and a half years when I left in January of 2000.

I went to Baylor to help start another biotech startup company. We worked to develop new drugs to treat osteoporosis, working from a base in the Texas Medical Center, Houston and in Cambridge, England. The company was sold in 2002 to another osteoporosis research company.

I'm now with BCM Technologies, which is the venture capital arm of Baylor College of Medicine. I spend my time evaluating new technologies in order to recommend certain ones for development and investment. Our goal is to invest \$100 million over the next four years.

I have enjoyed the sport of aviation for several years. I fly gliders and single engine airplanes of various types. I fly aerobatics and formation in my Yak-50 and hope to compete at some level in the



Glenn Friedrich flying his Russian Yak airplane in formation with three or four other Russian airplanes – Summer of 2005

near future. I also own a glider that I fly from a club strip northwest of Houston where some of the best soaring weather in North America occurs during our scorching summer months. Five-hour flights of over 300 miles are not uncommon – all without a drop of petrol. I also fly the Yak (a military trainer from the former Soviet Union) in a precision flying team of five Yaks, called the Lone Stars.

I have traveled some for pleasure and a great deal for work, having been to most US states and all over Europe. Unfortunately, I know Canada less well. I lived briefly in Switzerland while working with a pharmaceutical company, Sandoz, in Basel. I've visited Seoul, South Korea and made an extended trip to India, traveling in the north toward Nepal. I lived in Cambridge, England for a year. I'd like to travel in Japan, Australia and the south of Africa.

Friedrich, Lisa

By Lisa Friedrich



Lisa Friedrich and her son Chase Beloin, taken Thanksgiving 2007

On November 30th, 1967, I was born in the Royal Alexander Hospital in Edmonton to my parents, Marion and Richard Friedrich. I think I must have been my dad's best birthday present ever. His first daughter born on his birthday!!

I grew up on a farm with two older brothers and one younger brother. My sister came almost six years later. So needless to say, I was somewhat of a 'tomboy'. Keeping ourselves amused, my brothers and I used to pair up and play sports in our yard. When my sister wanted to play with Barbie's, I usually conceded but got away as soon as I possibly could. (Good thing I have a son!!)

Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre is where I attended school from grades one to nine. This is where I met my best friend, Crystal; she is a very important part of my life yet today. We then went off to the big scary high school, Sturgeon Composite High in Namao, where I graduated in 1985.

On August 22, 1997, I gave birth to my one and only child, Chase Michael Beloin. He is the pride and joy of my life! Chase and I live in Stony Plain, Alberta where we have our own home. Chase attends the French Immersion School in Stony Plain.

Most of my working career has been in the clerical field. I have recently completed College and have received certification in Graphic and Web Design. Also, I am currently completing an on-line accreditation in Travel and Tourism. Hopefully I will be working in one of these fields in the near future.

My all time favorite thing to do is travel. I have traveled to many places and will continue to have new experiences and discover new countries in my future.

Friedrich, Loran & Erena

By Loran Friedrich

Born on January 17, 1970 in Royal Alexandra Hospital, Edmonton, and named Loran Jules William Friedrich, I grew up on the family farm and I loved it. My parents were Richard and Marion Friedrich and my grandparents were Alphons and Regina Friedrich.

High school went by relatively uneventfully. I graduated in 1987 and went straight to the University of Alberta. My favourite summer during my under graduate degree was spent in Germany. There I worked in Berlin experimenting with superconductors for three months. I also met my relatives living in Germany and in particular I met Mareike Hoffman – the namesake of my first-born. I took weekends to travel through Eastern Europe (made some money off of currency exchange) and took a month to visit Western Europe. Many great memories and stories came from that summer.

In 1990 I met my future wife, Erena. In 1991, while she was busy finishing her Physics degree and working for the Russians, I worked on a M.Sc. and the two of us began planning our wedding (well... she planned it). We were married June 27, 1992. Erena was working in Calgary so we never actually moved in together until we moved to Kingston, Ontario. I started a Ph.D. and Erena started her M.Sc. I never finished more than a few months of my degree... but I did get Erena pregnant. Thinking back I realize that a pregnant wife must have scared me as I took off back to Edmonton leaving Erena behind. The next time I saw her, she was

substantially bigger and I had missed all the throwing up.

Erena had Mareike Marion on January 26, 1994 and promptly flew back to Kingston to defend her Masters degree at Queen's. Meanwhile, I was working on a Ph.D. in microelectronics. Along with Erena's third degree (Ph.D. in physics), came another baby. Michaela Mary was born on July 17, 1997. (We aren't giving our baby clothes away just yet – Erena's not done her degree yet).



Loran and Erena Friedrich family photo taken in 2006. Back row L to R: Michaela, Erena, Loran, Mareike. Front L to R: Madison, Mercedes

As Erena was busy at school, I hung out at the University and worked on a post-doctoral fellowship where I taught courses, worked on my back-swing, played a lot of hockey, did research and started my own business. I never came close to breaking 90 but my consulting business took me all over the US. I taught courses at companies like Lockheed Martin and Intel and they paid me a ridiculous amount of money, which I spent on computers.

My post-doc ended December 31, 1999. Twelve years of university and the most important thing I learned: I suck at golf... better get a job. After two months of doing nothing but playing hockey, I left for my new job at Intel in Oregon. Saying goodbye to my hockey team made me realize what good friends I had – ask me about my last game with the Stingers. At work, my title is Senior CAD Engineer. Make sure you put the 'engineer' at the end of that title.

Erena and my girls joined me the summer of 2000 and we moved into our new house (turned out to be an excellent time to buy real estate in Oregon). Erena worked from home for the University of Calgary and I was mostly happy at Intel. I still play a lot of hockey (roller and ice) and actually had Mareike and Michaela playing as well.

On January 31, 2004 we had another baby girl: Madison Mae, followed closely by Mercedes

Manning, July 17, 2005. We now have a full complement of girls, all of them MMF. I knew there was a reason for not getting rid of the baby clothes.

I left my job at Intel in 2005 (a mutually appreciated firing) and took a much better job at Tektronix where I get to manage a team of developers.

This year, 2006, marks the start of construction of our new home. We have a four-acre parcel of land on the outskirts of Hillsboro on which we are building our house. We will be moving in the summer of 2007 and trust me, there is room for visitors.

Friedrich-Fong, Fenton & Carol (Friedrich)

By Carol Friedrich-Fong

I was born in the St. Albert Hospital on April 26, 1973, the youngest child of Richard and Marion Friedrich, and I had a happy childhood living on the family farm. In 1991, I graduated from Sturgeon Composite High School as the recipient of the Governor General Award for highest marks in grade 12, but more importantly, I graduated with some lifelong friends.



Carol (Friedrich) and Fenton Fong with sons Benjamin and Nathan – 2007

In September of 1991, I moved away from home into Edmonton to begin studies at the University of Alberta. I sang with the University of Alberta Mixed Chorus and got involved with the Microbiology Students' Association. I had a wonderful time at the U of A and I seem to now only remember the good times, rather than the late nights of studying. I had my first experience working in a microbiology laboratory during the summer of 1994 and in April of 1995 I graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Honors Microbiology.

During the summer of 1995, I traveled through Europe and worked in a laboratory in Potsdam, Germany for two months. Thus began my desire to travel.

I moved to Vancouver in September of 1995 to start my Ph.D. studies at the University of British

Columbia. I met my husband Fenton Fong at UBC a year later. Together Fenton and I traveled to China, Mexico, Europe, the East Coast of Canada and many US states as well as doing numerous small road trips, camping trips and hiking. I have also traveled solo to Australia, Thailand, Malaysia, England, Ontario and Quebec.

Fenton and I married in 2000 and I finished my Ph.D. in 2001. I worked for a few years at Health Canada as a scientist before moving on to BCIT as a faculty member in the Biotechnology department. We bought a home in Vancouver in 2002. Our first son, Nathan Andrew, was born on August 9th, 2004 and our second son, Benjamin Richard, was born on August 8th, 2006. Our life is now centered on them and we love it!

Friedrich-Higgins, Margaret

By Margaret Higgins

I was born July 25th, 1946 to my parents, Alfons and Regina Friedrich, and a sister to Richard and Otto.

When I was born my parents had already built our new family home, with a wood burning stove, and a coal furnace. Electricity and running water was installed when I was about seven years old. It was a real treat to have indoor plumbing. (No more trips to the outhouse!)

When I was six years old (1952), my dad bought our first combine. Prior to that I still have some recollection of horse drawn machinery and trashing

machines. I had spent many hours playing in the fields while my mother was stooking.

As time went on, I developed a love for horses. We had a cranky old horse named Buck. He came by his name honestly, because as soon as we tried to get him to leave the farm, he would buck and the rider was walking home. My parents were concerned that Buck would seriously hurt me one day and decided it was time for him to go. I was promised another horse, but that day never came.

Otto had finished grade eleven and had now left home to attend high school in Edmonton. I was very excited on the weekends when I knew he was coming home.

In the fall of 1952, I started grade one in Alcomdale. My brother Richard, who was in grade eleven, and I would walk about a quarter mile to the bus stop. In the winter the bus was often late and Richard would build a fire to keep us warm.

When I started grade three in 1955, the boundaries changed and I was now able to attend the Catholic school in Mearns. This was a new experience to me, since now the teachers were nuns. Recess time was always a lot of fun. In the summer we played ball and in the winter we would skate on the outdoor skating rink. I was a little surprised when I found out the nuns could skate.

In the winter of 1956 we had a huge amount of snow. My dad was in Germany and would be away for four months. I would walk through large snowdrifts, until I would see the bus coming. Then our bus driver, Mr. Sheenan, would make a trail, so that I could get to the bus stop.

The sisters offered piano lessons and since we had our own piano, my parents made sure I would learn how to play. As my ability progressed, I was asked to play for recitals, concerts, and graduations.

I finished grade nine at Mearns and moved on to Camilla High School. I graduated from grade twelve in 1964. That summer I moved to Edmonton to pursue employment.

In 1970 I married and resided near Calgary where I raised my children. Crossfield, Alberta is still my home.

Frischknecht, Anton

By Lily Webb and Margaret Jordan

Our maternal grandfather, Anton Frishknecht, was born in 1857 at St. Lorraine, Germany, near the French border. When he was a young man he immigrated to Canada, however there is no known record of the exact date. Upon his arrival in this country he homesteaded in Alcomdale, northwest of Morinville.



Margaret Friedrich (age 4) on her cranky old horse named 'Buck' – circa 1949

In 1892 he married Louise Savard whose family had settled in the same area. They had ten children: Mary Ann (Pepin), Wallace, William, Joseph, Mary (Huberdeau), Armine (Logan), Josephine Dustie (Melvin), Bob, Maggie (Dubie) and Angus.

The family home was moved to St. Albert near the present day location of 25 Sunnyside Crescent. The road leading to the church was lined with trees, which were planted by the family. Rising many mornings at five a.m. to water them before the heat of the day showed the great love Anton had for his plants and flowers. Grandfather and some of the children helped in building one of the early bridges at St. Albert. On this job, our mother Mary fell, striking her head, resulting in a scar which she carried the rest of her life.

During World War I, Grandfather suffered the same prejudice as several other German immigrants. Several employers hesitated to hire him and some fellow employees did not want to work beside him. This did not affect the patriotism of the family however, as one son, one son-in-law and some grandchildren served Canada overseas in World War II.

Grandmother died the year of the flu, leaving young children. Our mother sacrificed her education to stay home to help raise her brothers and sisters while Grandfather worked to provide the necessities of life. As the young children became more independent, Mother worked for an aunt and great-aunt in Meanook, returning home for visits whenever the opportunity arose.

Grandfather moved from St. Albert to a site near the present brickyard on 170th Street and 118 Avenue. He eventually moved into Edmonton in the Calder area where he remained until his death in April 1944, at the age of 87 years.

Fulton, Warren & Orpha Family

History taken from "Decades of the Independence District" (1981)

Born in 1888 in Bass River, Nova Scotia, Warren Fulton came west to Southern Alberta on a harvest special in 1909 at the age of twenty-one. After the 1909 harvest he worked for the town of Lethbridge helping to plant the first trees there. The following spring Warren homesteaded two miles north of Lundbreck where he farmed, ranched and drove for a freight company.

In 1911, Warren met Orpha V. Hargrove who was born in St. Paul, Nebraska in 1893, moving north with her parents to the Lloydminster area in 1900. Orpha was reared and educated in the Lloydminster area choosing education as her vocation and was

teaching school in the Pincher Creek area in 1913. In 1915, Warren and Orpha were married in Lloydminster. Two children, Ward and Orpha, were born at Pincher Creek in 1916 and 1917.

In the fall of 1918 the Fultons moved north with seven freight cars of livestock. During the winter of 1918-19 they wintered on the shores of Lake George, west of Busby, on the Stockman farm. Warren had been in the area in the summer to stack quantities of hay for winterfeed.

In the spring of 1919, Warren purchased the NE¼-28-56-27-W4 from Bill Young. He moved his wife and family to the Bill Young farm, presently owned by Rick and Louise Dubois. He put in a small acreage to grain and built a new home on his new farm. During these preparations a new member of the family was added in May 1919 when Thompson was born. Making their home on the farmstead, they obtained water from a spring until a well was dug in 1920.

Early settlers of the area endured many hardships. During the winter of 1919-20, a near record-breaking snowfall and cold temperatures, along with feed shortage for livestock added to the problems of livelihood. Many of the farmers, Warren Fulton, Alex Macdonald, Jim Mitchell and others had to haul feed from Legal for their cattle, paying as high as one dollar per bundle, which today would be \$80 dollars per ton.

Along about this time, Warren's mother, Mrs. Rutherford Fulton, came to spend some time on the farmstead. She, along with Mrs. W. B. Mills, reorganized the Independence Sunday School.

A year or two previous, Warren Fulton had played a large part in obtaining a high school in Busby by using the United Church for a classroom during the week. Ward and Orpha Fulton, Bert Mitchell, Florence and Marshall Mills were some of the first students from Independence area to attend. They rode horseback or traveled with team and sleighs covering eight miles each day during the winter months.

About 1935 a young man who had recently come to the district, Elwood Benson, began to show up at the Fulton home with increasing regularity. In December 1937 young Orpha and Elwood were married and lived on the Benson farm in the Independence area.

Ward and Thompson were working for civil engineering crews in the summers of 1936-41. During the winter of 1939-40, Warren, Ward, Thompson, Archie Cameron, Tim Whitson and perhaps one or two more from this community, worked for a grubstake in the lumber camp at Whitecourt.

In June of 1936, Mr. and Mrs. Hargrove, parents

of Orpha Sr. who lived near the Fulton's, passed away within 24 hours of each other.

By this time Independence was a very active community with church, school and hall. Warren and Orpha accepted their fair share of work and responsibility along with the other seniors of the community.

Both Ward and Thompson went into the Air Force in 1941. They both served overseas during the war. Thompson was killed in action in 1943. Ward returned at the close of the war and purchased the original Fulton homestead and took up farming. He married Ruth Pettibone in 1941 and they had two daughters, Lois and Kay. Both girls married boys from the community. Lois married Robert Cox and they had four children: Deena, Leeann, Wesley and Tricia. Kay married Norman Kennett and they had two girls: Tina and Crystal.

Orpha and Elwood Benson have six children: Maxine, Victoria, Heather, Betty, Warren and Karen.

Cameron married Marjorie Fawcett whose parents were old timers in the Ray-Riviere Qui Barre area. They had five children: Randall, Byron, Janice, Ryan and Trevor.

Orpha Sr. passed away in 1966 after a lengthy illness. Warren continued to live in his own home until the fall of 1969 and then moved to the Northway Lodge in Edmonton where he lived until his passing in September 1973.

Ward Fulton passed away June 5, 1997 and his wife Ruth (Pettibone) Fulton passed away on March 18, 2006 at the age of 84.

Gibeau, Hector & Julma

By their children, Rita Prefontaine, Olive Vest & Romeo Gibeau

For more Gibeau school stories see "Tellier School"

Hector Gibeau, son of Joseph Gibeau and Regina Cloutier, was born on September 25, 1905 in St. Albert, Ontario. His parents moved to Morinville, Alberta in 1906 when he was a baby. He grew up on a farm two miles southwest of Morinville.

Julma Behiels, daughter of Joseph Behiels and Marie Collette Soetaert, was born on February 5, 1903 in Morinville, Alberta. She grew up on a farm five miles southeast of Morinville.

Hector and Julma were married on November 23, 1926 and settled on a homestead three miles southeast of Mearns, on E½ 15-56-26-W4 formerly owned by his father, Joseph Gibeau. This is where they raised their children. Shortly after Julma married, her mother passed away and they accepted the responsibility of caring for her younger sister, Phyllis, from early childhood until Phyllis started

working at the Mearns General Store. They lost their first born, Antoinette, at birth and their fifth child, Leonard, at the age of 16 months from "galloping" pneumonia. Both children are buried in the Mearns Cemetery.

The other children were Rita, Olive, Romeo, Maurice, Fernand (Fern), Eugene (Gene), Estelle and Joseph (Joe), all of whom are still living at the date this article was written. What follows are some of our memories.

On the farm Mom always had a large garden. In the fall we canned several hundred quarts of vegetables, raspberries, saskatoons, crabapples, rhubarb, chickens, peaches, pears, pickles, jams, etc. all of which was done on a wood stove as we did not have electricity. Our kitchen light consisted of a gas lamp. We went to bed by coal oil lamplight and in the barn we had lanterns.

Because we had a wood stove, many cords of wood had to be cut to last us the winter, so throughout the summer, slowly but surely we would work on this endeavor. Olive, taking her turn at splitting wood one day, came down with the axe and missed the log and the axe ended up in her foot. She then proceeded to pull the axe out of her foot and made her way to the house for Mom to deal with.

One mid-December day our father had gone to Edmonton to visit our mother in the hospital after she had given birth to our youngest brother, Joe. We siblings were left at home, the oldest ones taking care of the younger ones. We were seated at the kitchen table for the evening meal when flames were seen coming from the floor register. I guess we had stoked that coal-burning furnace "real good". Immediately we were on our feet and decisions made that Maurice would pump the water from the well that was about 50 feet from the house and that Fern and Gene would run the pails of water to the house. Romeo dumped the first pails of water on and around the register then hauled the incoming pails of water down the cellar to Olive who then threw the water upward against the floor of the house to stop the beams from burning. Dad came home to find five tired children but the house had been saved.

Mom would always order from the Eaton's and Simpson-Sears catalogues. She would send away for the order before school started in September so we would have new clothes and shoes for school. The postman would leave the parcels at the corner by the mailbox, three quarters of a mile from the house until we picked them up; never once thinking anyone would steal the parcels. That was unheard of.

Going to Church was not an option and we got there by whatever means most feasible. The car was

the preferred choice, but if the roads were impassable by car, we went by horse and sleigh. Midnight mass was one of these times. Dad would put bells on the horses' harnesses and away we would go in a double cutter with buffalo robes to keep us warm. During Lent we attended the Way of the Cross and Benediction on Friday evenings. On our way we would see the Northern Lights, white rabbits running in the snow, deer gazing at us and heard owls hooting in the distance. Dad sang in the choir for many years. Romeo, Maurice, Fern and Gene served as altar boys for Reverend Father Merchant.

Saturday afternoons, Father Merchant would bring his car to our place so that Maurice and Fern would wash it and he would pay them seventy-five cents. That was a lot of money for two young boys in those days.

During the Second World War and for several years thereafter, Dad spent many winter months working in the north on construction as a carpenter, the first being in Dawson Creek, B.C. while the Alaska Highway was being built. It was in Dawson Creek in 1942, while Dad was having dinner in a restaurant, that the American Army's dynamite storage warehouse located a few blocks away exploded. The blast shattered the window of the café, showering Dad with glass. A piece of glass pierced his left eye. As a result Dad had to return to Edmonton for treatment by specialists but eventually lost about 75% of the sight in that eye. This did not stop him. He continued working up north in the winter in various places such as Mayo, Whitehorse and Keno Hills in the Yukon as well as in Yellowknife, N.W.T. He also worked for a short time on the DEW (Distant Early Warning) Line. In 1966 he went to Fort McMurray, Alberta and worked at the famed Athabasca Oil Sands for Great Canadian Oil Sands Company, later renamed Suncor Inc., the world's first plant for commercial production of oil from oil sands.

While Dad was in the north, Mom would manage both the farm and the children. Rita, Olive and Romeo, being the oldest of the children, were responsible for doing the chores that consisted of milking cows, separating the milk, feeding chickens, pigs, horses and cows. After separating the milk, the cream was stored in cream cans in a well until shipping day. In the winter, when the roads were too snowed in for Mr. Billo, the cream man, to make it to our farm yard, Romeo would take the cream one and one half miles to the north corner with the horse and cutter for pick up. All this had to be done before 8:00 a.m. so we could be in school by 9:00 a.m. Mom had breakfast ready, lunches made and bricks warmed up in the oven on very



Romeo Gibeau at the farm near Mearns – circa 1935

cold days to keep our feet warm when riding to school with horse and cutter.

On one occasion, on our way to St. Charles School in Mearns with the horse and buggy, our horse became frightened by the train coming, froze at a standstill on the train tracks and would not move. Maurice, who was the oldest of the four, told Fern, Gene and Estelle to get out of the buggy. Maurice then unhitched the horse and got it off the train track by slapping it on its behind while Fern and Gene pulled the buggy back and the train went by.

In the fall when crops were ready to be cut, Dad would hire First Nations people to help stook. They would set up camp in the windbreak west of our home and we as kids, played with their kids. We enjoyed that time of the year.

This was about the time when our younger brother Joe, hearing the noise of the tractor, decided to go find Dad and walked into the wheat field. The wheat was so tall and he was so little. Mom sent Fern on horseback to find him before the binder did.

It was an exciting time when the threshing crew pulled into the yard. Mom prepared meals steadily from breakfast through to the evening meal and homemade bread and pies were continuous. The men would come in from the fields for the noon meal with their teams of horses, at which time they would also water, feed and rest their teams. The afternoon lunches were taken out to the fields. For the threshing duration the hired men would sleep in

the bunkhouse. Mom always had extra bedding. At that time, there was a program where you could send old woolens like socks, coats, etc., and in return, you would get beautiful new blankets.

It was always a treat when Dad would take one of us for a tractor ride when he was working the fields, although one day the rear tractor wheel climbed over a rock and caused Gene to fall off the tractor in the path of the tiller. As it turned out, the very rock that caused him to fall saved his life, as the tiller got bumped up over the rock and over Gene at the same time. Gene escaped that one with just a small cut on his head and on the back of his left knee. Needless to say, there were no more tractor rides.

To continue the saga of Gene, he went missing one day. The world came to a halt; everybody stopped what they were doing and began looking for him. We looked in the barn and hayloft, every granary, the shed, in the threshing machine. Finally, after searching high and low, we found him high on the windmill platform. He had been playing hide and seek with his brothers and had climbed up to the platform to hide, subsequently falling asleep in the nice, warm sun.

Romeo and his cousin Ray Gibeau shared many adventures together. One day, when they were about 12 years old, they were given permission to go hunting for crows and magpies in the bush three quarters of a mile north of our farmyard. They were armed with the single shot 22-calibre rifle that Dad had given Romeo and had taught him how to use. They came upon a huge nest high in a tree. As they got to the base of the tree, out of the nest flew a Great Horned Owl! They had no intention of shooting such a beautiful and unusual bird but Ray, being braver and more of an adventurer than Romeo, decided to climb the tree to see how many eggs were in the nest. He no sooner got to the nest when this big owl, dropping from nowhere out of the sky attacked him, raking Ray's head and face with her talons. Fortunately, Ray wore glasses, which probably saved him from losing an eye. He was able to hang on and just managed to keep from falling. Bleeding quite profusely, it did not take him long to get down the tree. They hurried home. Arriving back at the house, they thought it would be a good idea if Romeo would go in to get a wet face cloth or something with which to clean him before his mother (Aunt Laura) saw the bloody mess he was in. Romeo got caught! Needless to say, they both received a good 'talking to' that day. This was not the first time these two boys got into trouble, nor would it be their last.

Once a year during the summer, there was a parish picnic. Since we had an abundance of French lilacs that bordered our front yard, we would fill two

washtubs with the lilacs and take them to the parish picnic to decorate the tables for the parish supper. All parishioners brought food to the very successful fall suppers.

In the summer Romeo, Fern and Maurice would herd the range cattle down the roads and ditches on horseback to the government pasture by the Alexander Reservation approximately 10 miles west of our farm for pasturing. Mom would have lunches packed for them, as it was an all day event. Dad always followed in the car in case of an emergency.

Going to get the cows for milking was a nightly ritual that involved walking, so for a change, Maurice, Fern and Gene decided to take the tractor. The problem was that tractors make noise and Mom would hear, so they put the tractor in neutral and pushed it down a slight slope past the big granary before starting it to go to the pasture. Yup, they got caught!

Soap making was an all-day task and a once-a-year event. Mom would make a huge batch and pour it into trays. When it hardened, she would cut it into bars then wrap the bars with a special wrap designed for this purpose.

Butter churning was a job that we as kids reluctantly took our turns at doing. After much complaining, eventually and miraculously we could hear the buttermilk splashing. The cream had turned to butter! Yes! Mom would then take this butter and work it with a wooden spatula to squeeze out the remaining buttermilk and with a special pound form, would form it into pounds of butter and wrap it with one-pound butter wraps.

Many commodities such as sugar, tea, coffee and gas were rationed during the war and we were allotted a certain amount of coupons. Dad raised bees to supplement the sugar rationing.

Nylon stockings were not always available for purchase so we mended them with a special tool.

After the war, our parents bought two nylon parachutes. We had many yards of this beautiful nylon material and Mom made blouses and slips, Estelle's first communion dress and later, baptismal gowns for grandchildren. We also had an ample supply of cord from the parachutes that came in handy to bundle things or for use as rope or heavy string.

Mom sewed most of our clothes, especially the girls' clothes. She would make new things from old. She was an excellent seamstress. Olive and Rita were in their teens before they had bought clothes. She would also bleach the cotton sugar and flour bags to make tea towels and pillowcases.

Romeo raised a 4-H calf that was doing wonderfully until one day it had to be treated

because it had bloated. The calf still did well and came in fifth place by the judges.



4-H Club Local Competition Show at Morinville, Alberta

Besides mixed farming and going north to work, Dad still found time to serve as trustee on the Tellier School Board and later, the Sturgeon School Board.

Dad built a wind charger on the north side of the house. It consisted of a three-foot propeller attached to a 12-volt generator mounted on a six-foot steel tower that sat on a 15-foot high wooden platform. The wind and the generator provided 'juice' to a 12-volt car battery that was situated behind the radio we had in our parlor.

Mom would listen to her soap operas on the radio in the afternoons while baking or mending and when we came home from school we would sprawl out on the floor and listen to Roy Rogers and The Lone Ranger. In the winter evenings, we played many card games, Snakes and Ladders, Chinese

checkers, and other games. We had a blackboard on which we played Tick-Tack-Toe and Hangman. Marble games were played on the kitchen floor. Once in a while Dad would take us to Fraser Lake to skate when the ice was thick enough. In the summer we played ball, cops and robbers, hide and seek or pretended we were Tarzan and climbed trees in the windbreak or played with the bow and arrows and bulls-eye and there was always the aiming at something or other with a sling-shot. Also, we crawled inside old tractor tires and rolled down the slope. We walked on stilts and 'broke' horses, rode cows and calves. We were never bored and we never did master riding those pigs. Thinking back now, we are certain that God had a hand in keeping us safe.

Every household had a telephone and we would be several households per line but people were considerate of each other and when someone needed to use the phone and it happened to be busy, we would just cut in and ask if we could use the phone. No sooner said, it was done and the line was free.

The older children went to Tellier School for their elementary grades. In 1939, Rita, Olive and Romeo, along with 30 or so other Tellier School students, rode in the box of a big farm truck to Edmonton to see their Majesties King George VI and Queen Elizabeth on their visit through Alberta. Five miles of bleachers were built on both sides of Portage Avenue to accommodate approximately 68,000 people. Portage Avenue was later renamed Kingsway Avenue. Rita went to Belle Valley School for her grades nine and 10 then stayed with her grandparents in Morinville to finish her high school, as did Romeo. Olive was a border at the convent for her upper grades.

Dad sold the farm in 1952 and moved the farmhouse to Morinville. Joe, all of five years old, followed the house out the yard and down the road on his bike. Our house was a log house and heavy to move but there was not a crack in the walls when put on its new foundation in Morinville.

Much to our family's loss, Mom passed away August 1, 1965 at the age of 62 and Dad passed away December 27, 1977 at the age of 72. Both Mom and Dad are buried in Morinville. The remaining eight children all married, had children of their own and all live in Canada. When we all



The Gibeau Family – circa 1958. Back row: Romeo, Maurice, Fern, Gene. Middle row: Rita, Estelle, Olive. Front row: Julma, Joe, Hector

get together, nine times out of 10, our conversation goes back to reminiscing about growing up on the farm.

Gill, Arthur & Jessie

By Barbara Roy (Gill)

My parents were both born in Aberdeenshire, Scotland just a few miles apart.

Arthur, was born in September 1892, the fourth of five children born to Barbara Watson and James Gill. The family leased a farm, "Brae 'O Biffy", on the Aden Estate near Critchie. The name means 'hill by the Distillery'! In 1912 Arthur left Scotland to join his Mackenzie cousins near Lashburn, Saskatchewan. In 1913 the remainder of his family journeyed to Australia where they bought a dairy farm near Bundaberg.

Jessie was born in May 1905, the eldest child born to Williamina Mitchell and William Scott Walker. Scotty Walker had a dray business hauling freight from the train at Mintlaw Station. Early in 1906 they all came to Verdun, Manitoba where Scotty worked for a local farmer for a year. In 1907 they homesteaded at Lashburn, Saskatchewan, and in 1912 they moved to a rented farm at Namao. In 1917 he purchased land at Winterburn where he lived the remainder of his life. He was awarded a "Master Farmer" designation in 1933. He also had a dray operation in Edmonton hauling sand and gravel from the banks of the North Saskatchewan River. He had numerous teams of horses and employed many young Scottish immigrants that his wife cooked and cared for. Many remained dear friends and some became family.

When Arthur left the MacKenzie farm for Edmonton he was urged to look up Scotty. He worked for him for a time and became acquainted with the extended family group. Jessie's last doll was a Christmas gift from the young man.

Arthur joined the Canadian Engineers in the First World War and was stationed in France. After armistice he returned to Canada and Winterburn where he and Jessie soon became engaged to be married.

While working for the C.N.R. near Rocky Mountain House, Arthur was injured in an explosion set off by a co-worker. When he was given a cash settlement as compensation, Jessie suggested that he use it to visit his family in Australia before they married, as the trip would likely not be affordable when they were trying to get established. He was gone about two years, three months sailing time each way and a year spent visiting family members. He cleared a field for his brother-in-law at Gin-Gin

for planting sugar cane. He returned with a length of silk for Jessie's wedding gown, a gift to her from his mother.

They were married in the parlor of the house in Winterburn. A huge snowstorm delayed the wedding while George Gordon, Jessie's uncle who managed the farm, took a team and sleigh to get the Minister, whose car would not go through the drifts. The delay aligned a curious set of numbers. They were married at four o'clock on the fourth day of the fourth month in 1924!



Jessie and Arthur Gill

They rented land at Winterburn for three years where Bruce was born on Valentines Day in 1925. He was joined by Joyce in 1927; again the numbers! She was born at seven o'clock on the seventh day of the seventh month of 1927. They then farmed at Namao where Mavis was born on May 4th, 1929. They lived on land rented from Billy Harrold until 1933.

After three years of drought and three years of hail they moved to Riviere Qui Barre and the old Shamrock Hotel. There were thirty-three rooms and Jessie and her cousin Dolly Gordon managed to put curtains in every window, though the unused rooms were draped with crepe paper. The thirties were a time of ingenuity and making the most of what you could afford or scrounge! The hotel had a back kitchen with an icehouse. Joyce remembers having homemade ice cream as a treat, but not too often, as the ice was needed to keep the cream. Albert and Alice Cyre stayed upstairs for one teaching term. The children were somewhat annoyed at having to give up the space where they played 'Store' on rainy days!

In 1939 Arthur and Jessie and their three children moved to James Stevens' farm three miles south of Alcomdale. This was to be their home for the next twenty-three years (S½ 20-56-26-W4). The house was much smaller than their former home but

it was warm and comfortable by the standards of the day and hospitality was always forthcoming. Barbara was born May 26, 1941.

Many evenings of cards and games were spent with the O'Neill family from across the field. One evening the young folk sat around the dining room table telling ghost stories. Mom slipped out of the kitchen door with a large white dishtowel over the broom and waved it in front of the window. She got back in the house amid the screeches and gasps and went on making sandwiches without a word.



The Gill Family. Jessie, Mavis, Barbara, Arthur, Joyce, Bruce, 1941

Bruce and Hugh O'Neill were, and still are, great friends. One day Mom was baking pies and set them aside to cool. The boys took one and hid it in the shed, partly to let it cool and partly to see how annoyed she would be. When they went to retrieve the pie, the dog had beaten them to it! Mom was quite cross that the dog had eaten the pie, but she made a deal with the boys to buy the apples and she would make as many pies as they could eat. Another time she cooked enough corn for them to attempt to eat their height in discarded cobs.

The poverty of the depression years was followed by the uncertainties and sorrows of the war years. Bruce joined the R.C.A.F. as soon as he was eighteen. Baby Allan did not survive when he was born in 1943. Mom's cousin Ralph Gordon was killed in France; Dad's nephew Ian MacKenzie piloted his disabled plane away from the town of Riems and was killed in the crash, though his crew were able to bail out safely. Families were involved in Red Cross activities and sending food parcels overseas. Mom baked Christmas cake to send to Bruce, only to hear that he was missing in action. Typically she donated the cake to the Red Cross to raffle to make money. Thankfully Bruce was alive,

though wounded in a POW camp, and came home to us.

By the fifties things got a little easier. Turkeys were the farm mainstay. Some 'newer' old machinery was bought. Dad always spent a lot of time repairing and caring for machinery. I don't think he ever owned much new other than the Plymouth car that Mom bought with 'turkey money'. He was very good at keeping it all in running order. Many tasks were done with his beloved horses. He was a good horseman – a gift passed on to his son.

Rural electrification brought some changes to the farm. The first purchase was a vacuum cleaner; the second, electric motors for the washing machine and cream separator. Mom, Dad, Doris, Maurice Durand and I stood by in amazement as the wheel went around and around; then we rocked with laughter as we realized that the skim milk was pouring onto the porch floor because not one of us had been watching the pail as it filled to overflowing!



Arthur Gill with his electric cream separator

By the sixties the farm children had all been supplanted by grandchildren, nineteen eventually. Bruce married Doris Bailey of Independence. They had five sons and one daughter: Lyle, Donald, Ralph, Douglas and Bonnie. Joyce married Leonard Whitson and they farmed in the Independence area. They had five children: Brian, Marilyn, Linda, Terry and Philip. Mavis married Vincent Lewis of Newmarket, Ontario and was a C.R.N.A. in a hospital. They had a family of two girls and one son.

I married Paul Roy of Riviere Qui Barre and had a family of four sons and one daughter: Dale, Dean, Blair, Bruce and Jayanne.

By now, curling was more popular in the winters than the card parties had been. Both Mom and Dad loved the sport and did well at it. In 1962 Dad suddenly died of a coronary thrombosis on the weekend of a bonspiel he was planning to attend. Mom didn't do much curling after that, though she still enjoyed the occasional game or 'spiel'.

The snow was deep when Dad died and getting ready to leave the farm and dispose of things before planting time seemed too formidable, so Paul and I and three boys, soon to be four, stayed on the farm with Mom for the growing season. It was a bittersweet year: difficult for Mom to look out to the yard expecting to see Dad; fun for the boys as they pulled the new wagon to pick up the empty cream can at the gate or petted the new calves and piglets. Ed Williams helped on the farm that year and the boys followed him everywhere. Dean insisted on calling him 'Fred' and would only eat turnip because 'Fred' liked it. I enjoyed reconnecting with the neighbours and particularly enjoyed spending time with Mae Ellett. It was their last year on the farm as well and I used to go over and do her hair for her and have tea. Mom bought her writing desk at their dispersal sale and I now have and treasure it.

When Mom's auction sale ended we took our leave; us back to Riviere Qui Barre, Mom to Joyce and Leonard Whitson's farm.

Eventually we moved to St. Albert and Mom followed us, but that's another story. Mom died on April 15, 2001, exactly one month short of her 96th birthday.

In the years after Dad's death, Mom traveled twice to Australia, once to Scotland and to various North American destinations. She proudly attended anything her many grandchildren participated in and was a huge sports fan.

She slowed down somewhat in the cooking department, but still managed to bake wedding cakes for most of her grandchildren, using the recipe from which she made her own wedding cake so many years before. I now use that recipe from Scotland for my own family's Christmas cake.

When we look back and consider the hardships our parents endured, we Gill children marvel that we seldom realized we were poor in the monetary sense. We always had excellent food, adequate clothing, a piano, magazines and books. Our parents were avid readers and were very involved in community service. Our home was always welcoming and Mom was never happier than when cooking for a crowd. Dad usually entered the house,

turned on the radio, and later the television as well, settled in his chair, filled his pipe and read the Star Weekly. He would buy a new pipe for each grandchild to cut their teeth on as they nestled on his knee behind the outstretched paper he was reading.

We were truly blessed!

Girard, Joseph & Lorraine

By Joe Girard

Joseph Girard moved to the Mearns area with his parents and seven brothers in 1957 and enjoyed the fruits of the farm and the many friends of the area.

Joseph attended school at Mearns from grade one to grade nine then left and went to Edmonton to trade school and then went on to get his ticket in "B" pressure welding millwright. He worked at McMillan Bloedel from 1970 to 1981. From 1981 to the present time Joseph has worked at Molson Brewery as a maintenance mechanic.

Joseph shares many stories of the area and the people with his family. One that still saddens him is when Dennis and Rita Boddez drowned in one of the mine holes. They were his best friends and he was so often with the two of them. On this particular day he rode his horse over to Robert Altmiks' and played there, not knowing that tragedy was developing just down the road. The siblings had fallen into the mine hole and drowned. Joseph's parents believed he was with them. Frantically they had people dive looking for him. When news of this tragedy reached Mrs.



Joseph and Lorraine Girard

Altmiks, she promptly sent Joseph home to a quick hug and a severe punishment from his parents for not telling them of his whereabouts.

On a lighter note, Joseph proclaimed himself as the best downhill tobogganist (most times on cardboard) in the area. Skiing behind a horse was also a great sport amongst the brothers and their friends. At school he terrorized the girls with bugs and name-calling, all great fun for him.

But grow up he did (thank God!) and married Lorraine Schayes in July 1971 and started a home and family. Nicole was born November 1971 and Jefferey, June 1976.



Shane and Nicole (Girard) Williams with Kyla and Brandt



Jefferey and Lana Girard with Loryle

Joseph and his family moved back down Egg Lake Road on eighty acres in 1987 and built a home and farm. Here they finished raising their children. Nicole married Shane Williams of Kelowna, B.C. in 1996 and Jefferey married Lana Langlois of Edmonton in 2004.

While raising these two, Joseph was confident that none of his younger exploits were repeated by his children. Unbeknown to him at the time, kids will be kids and the story continues!

While enjoying a good life, Joseph was gifted with three grandchildren: Kyla and Brandt are Nicole's children and Loryle is Jefferey's daughter. Now Joseph knows what a blessing from God feels like! And his story continues...

Girard, Pierre & Yvonne

Joseph Girard



Pierre and Yvonne Girard on their wedding day, Oct. 1938.

Pierre and Yvonne (Rouault) Girard moved to the Mearns area in 1957 from a farm owned in Fort Saskatchewan. They traded farms with Fred Altmiks. This farm is located one half mile north of Egg Lake Coal Mine on Egg Lake Road. This farm started with five quarters of land and was gradually increased to eight quarters throughout the years.

Pierre and Yvonne enjoyed being members of many community events, one of which was curling in Alcomdale. Yvonne was a member of the C.W.L. and they attended the Mearns Church and many, many Mearns suppers and special events.



Pierre and Yvonne Girard Family. L to R: Victor, Marcel, Richard, Remi, Pierre (holding Bernard), Yvonne, Joseph and Maurice. Laurier was born after this photo was taken.

Pierre and Yvonne came to this community with eight boys whose ages ranged from eighteen years (Marcel) to eleven months (Laurier). As you can imagine, Yvonne's hands were full trying to manage a household and also garden, milk cows, help with harvest and keep two eyes on these rambunctious boys. The boys took the bus to the Mearns School where fond memories were made. There are stories of fist fighting, putting girls hair into the ink bottles, getting their tongues stuck to the metal poles, getting slivers from the wooden slide and the teacher (who happened to be a nun) removing it (still embarrassing). So many fun days and so many days of big trouble with the teachers!

Pierre and Yvonne loved to go fishing and camping and on most outings they were joined by their good friends and neighbors, Mr. & Mrs. Fred Nobert, Mr. & Mrs. Dan Sheehan, Mr. & Mrs. Emile Ricard and Mr. & Mrs. Fermin Boddez, just to name a few. Many stories were exchanged over a few drinks and a lot of laughs over a game of cards.

Both Pierre and Yvonne enjoyed the area and farming which helped feed eight growing boys. They farmed together, often with help from the boys, until May 29, 1985 when Pierre died from a heart attack. Sadly, Yvonne lived on the farm for almost two years until she sold the farm to their son Maurice (fourth oldest) and moved to Morinville where she resided until being moved to the Westlock Care Unit when age and its effects left her unable to manage on



Pierre and Yvonne Girard – circa early 1980's

her own. There she spent her remaining days until her death on June 2, 2005.

To carry on their memories are their boys, their spouses and their grandchildren.

Marcel married Marj Neil from Greibach and had three children, Jeanine, Monique and Paul. He lived in Cloverdale, B.C. and was a farmer and wood worker. Marcel passed away in January of 2006.



Girard Family -- L to R: Richard, Remi, Marcel, Maurice, Pierre, Victor, Yvonne, Joe, Laurier and Bernie on the occasion of Joe's wedding in 1970

Remi married Margaret Schayes from Morinville and had three children, Rita, Yvette and Robert. He was a farmer in the Picardville area. Remi passed away in June of 2006.

Richard married Bonnie Whytis from Wayburn, Sask., and had one child, Pierre. He lived in Viking before passing away in 1997. Richard was a barber.

Maurice married Jeannette Pelletier from Morinville and has three children, Michelle, Joanne and Monica. He lives in Legal and is a farmer.

Victor married Marj Cheroski from Devon and has three children, Patricia, Marie and Glen. He lives in Morinville and is a meat cutter.

Joseph married Lorraine Schayes from Morinville and has two children, Nicole and Jefferey. He lives in Morinville and is a millwright, welder and farmer.

Bernard married Delores Prefontaine from Legal and has two children, Angie and Tina. He lives in Morinville and is a truck and bobcat business owner.

Laurier married Jeanette Lutz from Morinville and has two children, Cherisse and Braydon. He lives in Picardville and is a farmer.

Though all the boys moved out of the Mearns area, their hearts and a deep fondness for the area and the people will always be with them.

Halle, Jim & Family

By son, Francis

George and Lea Halle were born a few miles apart from each other at farms on the Isle of Orleans near Quebec City. George left for Idaho in his teens where he lived and worked for several years in the late 19th century before returning to Quebec to marry Lea in 1905. They farmed near Coeur d'Alene, Idaho before moving to the Mearns area around 1911. George purchased two quarter sections of land. The home quarter was situated just northeast of where Pete Sheehan farmed while a second quarter was located just west of the Mearns graveyard. The home farm was a picturesque old place and was still standing up until a few years ago. The entryway can still be seen off of Township 562 near Range Road 262 at a point that the locals used to call 'Halle Hill'.

George and Lea had 5 children in all: Wilfred, Josephine, Joseph, Blanche and James. Their first son, Wilfred died as a toddler. He is likely buried in Idaho. Four other children were all born in Canada.

Josephine was born in 1911. 'Phine' married Robert Lirondelle and they farmed in the area until the early 60's before moving to North Vancouver. Robert and Phine had one daughter Doris. Both Robert (died 1988) and Phine (died 2003) are buried in the Mearns Cemetery. Their one daughter, my



George and Lea (Carrier) Halle on their wedding day in 1905
Halle, Jim

cousin Doris, worked as a teacher for 42 years in North Vancouver, until just last year. Recently retired, Doris splits her time between North Vancouver and Morinville where she has purchased a condominium. Doris and husband, George Kaleks, have two children: Robert in North Vancouver and Valerie (married to David Davenport) in Brooks, Alberta.



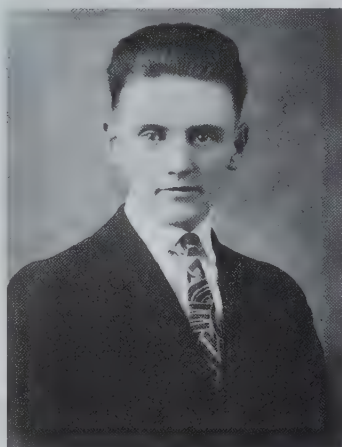
L to R: Joseph, Blanche, Jim, and Josephine Halle

Joseph Halle was born in 1909. He died tragically in 1932 in a car accident. He was, by all accounts, a wonderful young man and his loss was

widely felt. I remember my dad saying that his father, who died two years after Joseph, died of a broken heart. Joseph is buried beside his mother and father at Mearns. His wife, Lea Halle died in 1955. She is buried at Mearns between her husband and her brother, Onesime Carrier. Onesime was a Morinville area butcher in the early 20th century.

Blanche Halle was born in 1916. She married Albert Wulff and they farmed most of their life in the area. Albert and Blanche had one son, my cousin Ernest (married to Louise Hebert). Ernie and Louise still live on the Wulff home farm and their history is recounted elsewhere in this book.

My father, James Halle, was born in 1914. He lived most of his life as a bachelor farmer before meeting and marrying my mother, Doris Van de Ven in 1958. My mother had emigrated in 1955 from Holland to work at the Royal Bank in Morinville. Jim and Doris had four children: Lea, Francis, George and Marion. All of the children have since moved elsewhere. Lea, born in 1959, currently lives in the BC interior where she works as a drafts-person. Francis, born in 1960, lives in Vancouver with his wife Shelley and their son Freeman. He is a project manager with the regional health authority. George, born in 1961, lives on the Sunshine Coast in BC and works for the local school



Joseph Halle, born 1909, died 1932



Halle family in photo taken in 1926. Back row L to R: Joe, George, Lea, Josephine (Phine). Front row L to R: Jim and Blanche

district. Marion, born in 1964, lives in the Fraser Valley where she operates a catering business.

In the early 1960's, Jim and Doris sold the home place to Gus Walters of Edmonton and then purchased Robert and Josephine Lirondelle's farm off Range Road 261 and 564. Jim Halle operated the farm as a broiler-breeder operation until his retirement in 1978.

Jim and Doris eventually parted ways and in 1978 Jim moved to Edmonton where in 1988 he married Aline Vaillancourt. Jim passed away in 2005 and is buried in the Mearns Cemetery beside his brother, Joe, and his parents. Doris Halle died in 1990 and is buried in Aylmer, Quebec. At the time this article was written, Aline was still living in Edmonton.



Phine (Josephine) with Doris and Robert Lirondelle in 1959



Jim Halle in 1954 traveled to Quebec, New England States, and New York with his mother in the last year of her life so she could see her family one last time



Jim holding his first born, a daughter, Lea in April 1959

Harrington, Tim & Marie

By Betty (Harrington) Melton

Tim Harrington wrote in 'Decades of the Independence District'...

"I first saw 'beautiful downtown Alcomdale' on a hot July day in 1926 from the front seat of the Ellett Bros. truck, converted from a Model T car. I worked for Elletts that summer and fall. Then I got the job of teaching in the New England School at Alcomdale, just a quarter of a mile west of the town. My wage was seven hundred dollars. Marie Dressler (my wife) and I were also building a house and farming at this time.

I bought the farm in 1927, SE 36-56-27-W4, one mile west and a half a mile south of Alcomdale. I built the house that same fall. In 1932, I quit teaching and settled down to the business of farming, with the help of an axe and old Maggie and Bess. In a few years I had some acres in crop and then Stan Whitson and I began changing horses. By this time I had the old Hart Parr and for spring work he used my two horses as well as two of his own, one on the seed drill. In the fall I used his two on my binder. I remember him remarking one evening on the telephone when I had phoned to see how things were going, "I've got four horses, a hundred years old on the drill and I'm stepping on the boys' heels", who were doing the ploughing and harrowing.

I finally got some 140 acres plus in crop with a very small monetary expenditure but a terrific outlay of 'sweat, blood (actual) and tears' to quote Sir Winston.

Marie and I had four children: Betty, twins Lucille and Eugene, and Carole. All the children attended Alcomdale School.

Marie was a member of the Independence

Women's Institute. We both took an active part in the Independence community. Later we became members of the Alcomdale Community League and were very active there.

For perhaps a half a dozen years after I settled in the district, there wasn't a single death. Jack Ellett's was the first. But since then, there has been a complete turnover, beginning in my immediate neighborhood; Joe Jaworski, Dimitri, Mr. Cameron, Mr. and Mrs. Sam Walters, George and Elmer Timney, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Nobert, Mr. and Mrs. Gagne, Mr. and Mrs. Racine, Mr. and Mrs. Joe Morin, Luther Bacon, Mr. and Mrs. William Elliott, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Bailey, all the Magirls, Mr. and Mrs. Stan Whitson, Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Mills, Mr. and Mrs. M. Keene, Mr. and Mrs. W. Davidson and son Robert, Mrs. Plitt, Mr. and Mrs. James Sutton, Mr. Plitt, Mr. Alex Macdonald, Mrs. Warren Fulton, Mr. and Mrs. Lovelock, Mr. Ross Pettibone, Mr. and Mrs. George Moore, Bill and John Spargo and their mother, Mr. and Mrs. J. Aslin, Clarence Duncan, Fred Harvey and others."

My father Tim passed away in 1975 and my mother Marie passed away in Edmonton.

My Memories

- Alcomdale Picnic, the biggest event of the summer! Easter Monday Dance – greatly anticipated and hoping it wouldn't have to be cancelled due to weather.
- Walking the mile and a half to and from school with Stella and Phyllis Jaworski (who lived across the road) and later riding the school bus, which Alan Mills drove, always cheerfully.
- Skating at Olesko's rink or at Alcomdale at 20 degrees below Fahrenheit.
- In the fall, threshing crews. What excitement when they got to our place.
- Buster Ferguson's jingle bells on his horses.

I, Betty married Mike Melton from Edmonton (he died in 2004) and live in Calgary. We had five children. Lucille went to Los Angeles, married Leslie Ellsmore from England and has one daughter. Eugene (Gene) never married and lived in Vancouver. He passed away in 1976. Carole married Dave Harwood from Edmonton and then lived in Vancouver. They had a daughter and son. Sadly, Lucille, Gene and Carole passed away rather young.

Hartman, Harvey & Jacqueline (Banack)

By Jacqueline Hartman

I was born Jacqueline (Jackie) Lynn Banack on December 20, 1964 to Ludick and Pauline Banack in Westlock, Alberta. I was the fourth child in a family of five.

I went to school in Riviere Qui Barre for grades one and two (1971-1972), Holden, Alberta for grades three to nine (1973-1979) Leduc, Alberta for grades 10-12 (1980-1982), graduating in 1982.

I married Harvey E. Hartman on May 25, 1985 in Leduc. We have two children, Kevin Christopher who was born to Harvey July 12, 1978 and Tammy Marie who was born November 4, 1986. Kevin came to live with us in July of 1989. Both kids attended Leduc for their schooling. Kevin graduated in 1996 and Tammy in 2004.

Currently we live in Leduc. Harvey is employed at the Edmonton International Airport as a maintenance supervisor. Jackie works for a real estate company in Edmonton. Tammy works at the airport and lives at home. Kevin lives in Airdrie, Alberta and works for an oilfield company in Calgary. Kevin has a son, Julian Keith, born July 4, 2004.

Herbert, Dale & Dianne

By Diane Herbert (Brenneis)

The year was 1974. I was eighteen and working as a waitress at Boston Pizza in Edmonton. My roommate Cam and I were moving so she asked her boyfriend to help. He couldn't, but sent a friend of his instead. This friend, Dale, came and helped us move and then asked Cam out for a date! Her and her boyfriend, Jack, were on and off all the time. She refused, so he asked me. We went to a movie together and he slept on the floor that night. Well, here it is 31 years later and he still sleeps on the floor after a movie!



Dale & Dianne Herbert

The following year our daughter Carla Teresa was born, August 17, 1975 at the weight of two lbs, 14oz. She came along two months early. She always did have a mind of her own! With the miracle of modern medicine she did fine and was home on or about the time she should have been born.

Dale's family owned a cabin out at Skeleton Lake near Boyle, Alberta. We enjoyed many a sunny weekend there with our little girl. The ducks were so tame that Carla could walk up to them and feed them. We all loved it at the lake! In 1979 I became pregnant again, this time with twins. In February we decided to move to Camrose so Dale could continue working as a surveyor for a municipal engineer. Sadly, in May we lost our twins, a boy and a girl, Jeffrey and Lisa.

Life continued on and November 5, 1980 our son Jeremy was born. My favorite memory of that time is when Dale brought Carla to visit her new brother in the hospital. Carla was sitting on the bed holding the baby when she let out a squeal. Her new baby brother had peed on her! Jerry has always been a quiet boy but despite the fact that his parents are short (5' 7" or so), Jerry has topped out at 6' 4" to 6' 5" – a tall boy!

Things have gone along smoothly enough. Dale's job has evolved so that he now works spring, summer and fall and is home during the winter. In 1982 I started working for the TD Bank. In September 1985 we bought the house that we are presently living in. We did typical family things – camping trips to B.C., birthday parties, etc. Then on January 21, 1991 our family expanded again with the addition of a new daughter, Breanne. What a breath of fresh air she is. Just what we needed!

In 1994 Carla graduated from high school and took a summer job working with her father in Fort Nelson, B.C. She then studied for two years at Red Deer College and then entered the work force. Jeremy graduated in 1998 and is presently employed and living in Edmonton. Breanne is in grade nine and is busy making plans for life after school.

This is by no means the end, as you will find out when you read Carla's story.

Carla's story

In June of 1998 I met Antonio (Toni) Marino, born October 22, 1974, through some friends that we both knew. We all went to the river after work one night to hang out and have some fun together. We started dating and got engaged that Christmas. On September 16, 2000, I married the love of my life.

Two years later we had been thinking of starting a family and after months of humming and hawing over whether we should really go for it or not, we decided to take the plunge into the wonderful world of parenthood and never looked back. How could we? We never have the time! At 2:30 in the afternoon on December 24, 2003 we met the second love of our lives, Rian Lawrence Ewald Morin. He

is now nineteen months old and such a joy in our lives. Every day I wonder what sort of things he will accomplish and admire the extreme happiness that he finds in the simplest of things. The joy and the love of a child is one of the most simple and the most powerful things that I have ever encountered in this world. I am forever wondering what will happen in the next moment.



Jermy & Breanne Herbert, Carla & Toni Morin – Sept. 2000



Carla, Toni & Rian Morin – 2004

Hermanutz, Alfred & Violet (Brenneis)

By daughter, Gail Joly

Alfred was the eldest son of Paul and Mary Hermanutz. When he wasn't attending Egg Lake School he was busy working on the family farm. Still in his teens he quit school to work full time on the farm. Later on, he supplemented his income by working at lumber camps in Athabasca for a few winters.



Alf & Violet (nee Brenneis) Hermanutz – Oct. 28, 1953

Aside from working long hours, Alf's desire to be active was apparent in the way he participated in various sports whether it was curling, hunting (although this sport was more for the camaraderie than the actual hunt), fishing, or pitching for the Alcomdale Baseball Team. He also enjoyed getting together with friends and family. And then there were local dances and various community and church functions. It was through these social events that Alf met his future bride, Violet.

Violet Mary Brenneis was born on September 18, 1930. She was the eldest daughter of Edward

and Elizabeth (Elise) Brenneis. Violet attended school at the convent in Morinville until the family moved to the Mearns area in 1940 where she finished her education at Belle Valley School.

Alf and Violet dated a while and then married on October 28, 1953. They initially lived in a three-room house built on the Hermanutz home quarter. Another room was added later to accommodate their growing family. Violet often said that some of the best years of her life were when she and Alf were raising their seven children, five girls and two boys.

Life on the farm in the early years wasn't always easy: wood burning stove, wringer washing machine, no hot running water, no fully automated farm equipment, just to name a few. Still, there were plenty of good times. Holidays and special occasions meant there would be lots of family around. During the summer there were always extra cousins staying with Grandma and Grandpa. Harvest time was bustling with extra help and activity (the kids thought it was great that Dad would let them drive to Alcomdale to have the grain tested).



May 1963 – Valerie Hermanutz' First Communion. Violet, Alfred, Sandra, Valerie, Gail and Brian.

Somehow Dad always found time to play a few games of soccer or baseball 500, and give tips on how to rig up a floatable raft when the spring melt filled the ditches and covered portions of the yard and pasture. Although Mom was busy running the household, or working outside tending to the huge gardens or the animals, there was always time to read to us kids, teach us how to ride a bike, or help set up an imaginary town in the yard.

Then there were the all-night monopoly or crib

games with the cousins while the adults went out to the cabarets hosted by the community. There were church suppers (as kids we remember the fishing pond in the basement), community dances and cattle roundups. The family always enjoyed having neighbors, friends and family dropping by.

In 1967 the farm purchased the house in Edmonton for Paul and Mary's retirement. Alf and his brother Joe continued operating the farm. That same year Alf and Violet and their family moved into the larger home on the homestead along with Joe.

As the years went by, new buildings were added and more land was purchased. In 1973 Alf and Violet purchased a quarter of land (NE 15-57-26-W4) from Josef Albers.

In 1979 Joe moved into a mobile home on the home quarter.

The farm partnership between Alf and Joe continued until Alf passed away suddenly on December 22, 1988. He was only 60 years old when he suffered a heart attack.

Violet remained on the farm after Alf died and, with the help of her son Trevor, continued farming with Joe until 1992 when she sold her share of the farming operation.

In 1993 Violet moved to St. Albert. Here she was closer to her children and grandchildren and loved to have everyone over. She also had a lake lot and enjoyed spending time there with her family over the summer. During this retirement time she read more, went for long walks, crocheted beautiful afghans for her kids, and enjoyed her friends. Unfortunately, this time was short, as she died unexpectedly on February 12, 1998. She passed away peacefully in her sleep of heart disease.

The Seven Children

The seven children attended various schools in the area, which included St. Charles in Mearns, Camilla in Riviere Qui Barre, St. Albert High and Sturgeon Composite High. In addition to helping out on the farm, they were involved in various sports and in many of the activities and functions within the Mearns area and surrounding communities.

Valerie was born November 24, 1954. She lived in Edmonton most of her life. In 2005 she lost a courageous battle with cancer and passed away at the age of 50.

Gail was born April 6, 1956. She married Armand Joly on July 5, 1986. They lived in Edmonton until moving to Victoria in 2003. Gail works with Armand (a chartered accountant) in his accounting practice.

Sandra was born May 28, 1957. She and her husband, Rick Fedirko, were married on March 2,



The Hermanutz Family: Lisa, Brian, Gail, Shannon, Trevor, Valerie and Sandra

1991. They live in Edmonton with their two sons, Rye and Curtis. Sandra is employed by Canada Post and Rick works for Telus.

Brian was born June 10, 1960. He married Jean Yaworski on April 24, 1993. They have three children, Bryce, Kaylin & Ty, and reside in Edmonton. Brian is a fire fighter with the Edmonton Fire Department. Jean is a dental hygienist and a registered nurse.

Lisa was born August 6, 1963. She married Terry Sopkow on April 25, 1992. They live in Edmonton with their three children, Eric and twin girls, Taylor and Sara. Lisa is a chemical technologist and works for Maxxam Analytics. Terry is a materials research technologist with Schlumberger.

Trevor was born May 6, 1967. He and his wife, Fiona McMillan, were married on February 25, 1994. They have two children, Zane and Ayla, and live on an acreage in Sturgeon Valley. Trevor is a police officer with the Edmonton Police Service. Fiona teaches junior high school in St. Albert.

Shannon was born March 4, 1970. She married Karim Moti on June 22, 2002. She lived in St. Albert until moving to Houston, Texas in 2002 where her husband, a chemical engineer, opened an office for Matrikon. Shannon is an x-ray technologist.

In 2001 the children sold two quarters of land (NE 15-57-26-W4 and SE 15-57-26-W4) to the Van Brabant family.

The children still own one of the original quarters of land (NW 11-57-26-W4) settled by Paul and Mary Hermanutz.

Hermanutz, Paul & Mary (Kluthe)

By granddaughter, Gail Joly

Paul (whose birth name was Thaddeus) was born in Unlingen, province of Wurttemberg,



Paul & Mary (nee Kluthe) Hermanutz – April 14, 1925

Germany on September 28, 1895. It was Thaddeus' brother, Paul, who was originally planning on immigrating to Canada. Paul became ill and passed away so Thaddeus (17 years old at the time) traveled in his place. He was sponsored by his older brother, Joe, who had earlier come to Canada and was homesteading in the town of Eunice, Alberta, which is now called Dapp. Paul (Thaddeus) arrived in Canada on July 7, 1913. His documents were changed and his name became Paul Thaddeus Hermanutz.

Mary Kluthe was born in St. Albert on December 14, 1895. She was one of seven children born to Joseph and Elizabeth Kluthe.

Paul and Mary met when he came to work on her family farm. There, they fell in love and were married on April 14, 1925. They lived in the St. Albert area until 1928 when they purchased two quarters of land in the Mearns area from Alfred Logan (NE 10-57-26-W4 and NW 11-57-26-W4). An additional quarter (NW 10-57-26-W4) was purchased in 1941 from George O'Grady of Edmonton. A last quarter (SE 15-57-26-W4) was purchased in 1946 from Jack Graft.

The crop revenues earned from harvesting the

above land, along with the additional income received from cattle, pigs and chickens, provided a good living for the family.



Hermanutz first family home. Children: Gertie (O'Neil), Helen (McGillis) and Alf



Paul & Mary Hermanutz with children Gertie & Alf

Paul and Mary raised six children: four girls and two boys. They all attended Egg Lake School. The youngest child, Doris, went to Mearns School after the Egg Lake School closed.

Paul and Mary remained on the farm until 1967 when they retired and moved to Edmonton. Their home was always open to their family and for a number of years there was always a grandchild or two staying with them while attending school or starting out in their career.

Paul passed away on August 8, 1974 of cancer and Mary lived another few years until her death on May 22, 1982.

The Six Children

Gertrude (Gertie), born November 26, 1926. She married Hugh O'Neil on February 5, 1948. They lived in Edmonton where they raised their four children, Reggie, Vicky, Darlene and Marilee. Gertie passed away on November 25, 1998.

Alfred, born May 28, 1928. Alfred married Violet Brenneis and their story is in the book.

Helen, born December 12, 1929. She married John (Bud) McGillis on May 24, 1950. They raised

their 10 children in the Riviere Qui Barre area, six daughters and four sons: Barry, Jim, Joan, Janet, Linda and Lorna, Jean, Bernice, Bob and Paul.

Betty, born February 2, 1932. She married Norman Cunningham on November 13, 1953. They moved to Girouxville in northern Alberta where they raised their five children, Sharon, Dale, Sheila, Allan and Karen. They later retired to Kelowna, B.C.

Leonard Joseph, born March 26, 1933. Joe was 14 years old when he left school at the end of grade nine and started farming with his father, Paul, and his brother, Alf. Other than a period of six years when he worked for Comeau Gas and North American Road pressure testing gas lines, he farmed until he was 65 years of age. Joe was active in curling and baseball in the community and surrounding areas. He was an avid fisherman and hunter, which he still enjoys. He married Sue Cote on March 26, 1993. In 2003 Joe retired from farming and sold his two quarters of land (NE 10-57-26-W4 and NW 10-57-26-W4) to the Lutz family. Joe and Sue bought an acreage in the St. Albert area where they currently live. In his retirement, Joe enjoys landscaping and gardening. He also belongs to an antique club.

Doris was born January 2, 1936. She married David Ingram on July 20, 1957. They live in Edmonton where they raised their three children, Donna, Heather and David.

Hesse, John & Jean & Ellen

By John Hesse



John and Jean (DeRudder) Hesse cutting their wedding cake – 1970

I am Johnny Hesse, born to William Hesse and Barbara Hesse (nee Lutz) on November 24, 1936. I am one of three brothers, the others being Raymond Hesse of Vimy and Christian Hesse of Edmonton. I was born in the Westlock Hospital, Raymond was born at home in Vimy and Christian was born in Westlock.

I left home at the age of 18 years to work on the oil rigs and traveled throughout Alberta. In 1958 I moved to the Morinville area where I remain living to this day. I still worked on the rigs during the winters until 1963 and farmed during the summer. During this time I cleared 150 acres of bush, built a number of granaries, a garage and a hip roof barn.

In 1970 I married Jean DeRudder also of this area. In 1973 Jean and I welcomed our daughter, Carol. We continued farming, raising hogs and Angus cattle. We carried on life on the farm with Carol active in 4-H, Squirettes and completing high school. Jean suffered from severe arthritis. In 1984 Jean had surgery to replace both of her knees. In 1986 we had the misfortune to loose our hog barn and hogs to fire. We raised no more hogs but continued with grain, hay and cattle. In 1992 Jean required surgery on the arthritis in her neck. Sadly this surgery was unsuccessful and she passed away on November 3, 1992. I carried on farming while Carol attended university and worked part time at the Youville Home.



John, Jean and Carol Hesse – 1980

In 1997 I met Ellen Reynolds and we dated for about one year. We married on June 6, 1998. Carol moved to Edmonton and got her degree in Recreational Therapy. Ellen and I continued to farm. In 2001 we sold the cattle and continue to raise grain and hay until the present time. Our livestock now consists of two dogs, four cats and three horses.

On September 8, 2001, Carol married Darryl Ewanchuk at St. Jean Baptiste Church in Morinville. On January 14, 2003, Miss Kailey Ewanchuk, our little princess, was born. She and her parents now live near Big Lake, St. Albert, where she keeps visitors laughing with stories of her cats Maxie and Picasso. Ellen and I are happy that she visits us every other Thursday for the whole day.

Ellen has three children, Shauna Lefebvre, Andrea Linton and Vince Kozak; four granddaughters: Kristy, Jackie, Josie and Jamie; and one great-granddaughter, Keanna. Shauna and Dan live east of Sherwood Park. Andrea and Wade live south of Fort Saskatchewan. Vince and Laurie live in Sherwood Park. Kristy and Keanna live in Edmonton, as does Jackie and Scott. We all spend Easter and Thanksgiving at the family cottage on Skeleton Lake near Boyle. Ellen and I, along with our children and grandchildren, enjoy the days spent at the lake.

At present we reside on the farm where I have lived for these many years. LIFE IS GOOD!



John and Ellen Hesse – circa 2005



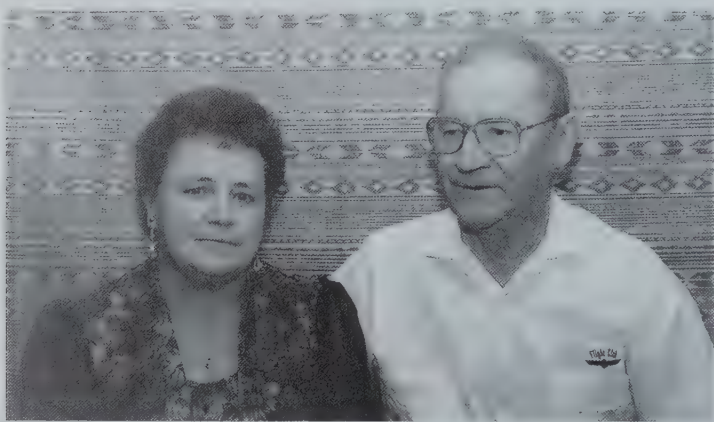
Carol (Hesse) and Darryl Ewanchuk with daughter Kailey – circa 2004

Hittinger, Patrick & Sophie

By the family

Patrick and Sophie Hittinger were married Feb 16, 1953 and moved to Mearns in the spring of 1968. They had six children.

Barbara Hittinger, born March 5, 1955, has three children with Albert Lyzanivk; Christine Hittinger born January 6, 1989, Daniel Hittinger born November 15, 1991 and Charlene Hittinger born November 4, 1994. They reside on a farm in Thorhild.



Sophie & Patrick Hittinger

Irene Reinitz, born August 14, 1957, married Michael Reinitz. She has two children with her previous husband, Rick Conrad: Angela Conrad, born December 7, 1974 and Cara Padmore born September 20, 1976. They and their children reside in Edmonton.

Bernard Hittinger, born September 18, 1958,

married Denise Carignan. They have one son Dallas, born August 22, 1992. They reside in Morinville.

Donald Hittinger, born December 25, 1959, married Susan Snyder. They have three children; Michael, born February 5, 1988, Alicia, born September 15, 1991 and Cameron, born September 9, 1993. They reside on an acreage between Mearns and Alcomdale.

Maryllynn Douglas, born August 18, 1961, married Kirk Douglas. They have two children, James, born October 27th, 1983 and Lisa born July 9th, 1985. They reside in Morinville.

Brent Hittinger, born April 17, 1966, married Rhonda Mitchell and they have one child, Cody, born June 20, 1991. They reside in Morinville.

Pat passed away on March 8, 1997 and Sophie passed away September 21, 2005. Mearns was still considered the family home until Sophie's passing in 2005.

Hodgins, Eric & Mabel

By Les Hodgins & Elma M. Steele

Eric and Mable Hodgins moved to the Sion district in the fall of 1934. They lived one mile west of the Sion store. They had four children, Florence, Les, Pat and Bob.

Florence left the farm in 1935 and moved to Seattle.

Pat lived on the farm until 1939 when she moved to Edmonton.

The Hodgins family farmed until 1940 at which time Eric, Mabel and Bob moved to Alcomdale where Eric worked for Alan Mills. They lived in Alcomdale until approximately 1946 when they moved to Redwater. Bob went to school in Alcomdale until they moved.

Les took over the farm in 1940 until 1945 when he moved to Alcomdale to work for Alan Mills, Ted Rinas and Clarence Duncan (Clarence and his wife had a daughter named Jessie).

Bob Hodgins has passed away.



Eric, Mabel & Les Hodgins in 1940 when they moved to Alcomdale



Alcomdale Ball Players. L to R: Les Hodgins, Johnny Hudkins, Morris Logan

Houle, Alphonse & Mary (Verbeek)

By daughter, Juliette

My father was Joseph Omer Alphonse Houle. His parents were Omer and Hermina Houle. Grandpa Omer was born in Joliette, Quebec. At age four he came west with his parents. Grandma Hermina (nee Racine) came west with her parents at age 16. Granny and Grandpa Houle were married in 1910. My father, Alphonse, was born in October 1910. My grandparents lived in the Alcomdale area for a number of years and later moved to the Morinville area. It's interesting to note that my grandmother, Hermina, who was born in St. Albert, Ontario, spent her later years in the Youville Home in St. Albert, Alberta, where she died at the age of 102.

My mother was Mary Verbeek. Her parents were Henri and Mathilde Verbeek. Henri was the 15th child in a family of 19. His father was a miller and the windmill in which my Grandfather worked was the home of my grandparents' family. Today this windmill has a museum status in Kinrooi, Belgium. By age 24 my grandfather had served four years in the cavalry in Leaze.

Grandpa Henri married Mathilde Jacobs in 1900. My mother, Mary Gertrude Dorothea was born March 23rd, 1901. More joined the clan, Joseph, James, Andrew, Bertha, Juliette (my namesake), were all born in Bree, Belgium. Andrew and Bertha died as babies and were buried in Bree.

In April 1908 big changes were made. Grandpa

and Grandma Verbeek immigrated to Canada. They left their much-loved mill and traveled to Antwerp where they boarded the ship 'The Lake Michigan' and set out on a 13-day voyage to Canada. My mother celebrated her 7th birthday in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. After three days of rough sea, Grandpa became seasick. Grandma had her hands full with three active children, a sick baby, expecting another one and a sick husband. They arrived in St. John's, Newfoundland, and boarded a train to Strathcona, Alberta, now known as Edmonton. The train trip of 4,000 miles brought them to their new home on a farm near Morinville. Baby Juliette died shortly after they arrived and was buried in St. Jean Baptiste cemetery in Morinville.

My mother Mary was a very hard worker and was able to speak eight languages. She worked along side Grandpa and her brothers like a hired man. She met a suitor and wanted to marry and start a life for herself but Grandpa wouldn't hear of it, so she continued to work on the farm. She later met and married my dad, Alphonse Houle. They were married in St. Jean Baptiste church in Morinville, in May 1936 by Monsignor Pilon.

Once married, Mom and Dad set out on their new life together and moved to a small farm on the north side of Egg Lake, also known as Manawan Lake. Their first son, Joseph Henri George, was born in April 1937.

Mom and Dad then moved a few miles west and bought a half section of land in the Mearns district from the Smith brothers who lived in Scotland. The legal land description of their old farm is SW 11-57-26 W4. They paid a grand total of \$4,000, a lot of money in those days. In October 1939, a second son, Joseph Omer Simon, was born. In 1941, I was born, their 3rd child and only daughter, Mary Jeanne Juliette Houle.

By the time Mom and Dad married, Mom's years of hard work had taken a toll on her health. Rheumatoid arthritis was ravaging her body at 40 years old. I never had the opportunity to see my mother walk since she became bedridden shortly after I was born. Mom went to many hospitals seeking help. I remember well the time when she came home from the Banff hospital where she received gold treatments. This was one of the many attempts to find relief. Mrs. Mary Altmiks and Dad went to pick Mom up. This was the one and only time I had ever seen Mom standing, with help from Dad and Mrs. Altmiks. I hadn't realized how tall she was. In 1957 my brother Simon and Mom's good friend Irma Houle, took Mom to the Uranium Mines in Butte, Montana. In spite of all that, Mom was bedridden for 23 years. She prayed constantly for

the well being of her family and died in April 1966, one month after she turned 65.

Unable to care for her children, George and Simon lived for a while at the Grey Nuns convent in St. Albert. George later stayed at Uncle Albert and Grandpa Henri Verbeek's place. Simon stayed at the Houle's. Since Grandma Mathildes' death in 1943, Grandpa Henri was very lonely and wanting to help my mother, he came and got me and cared for me. After Uncle Harry Verbeek, Henri's son, met and married Irene Boddez, I went to live with them. I stayed with various relatives and friends of the family. I remember staying at Aunt Irene's parents place too. It was fun to play upstairs with her sister Thelma's dolls and Grandma Boddez was so good to me.

The time came to go to school. What to do? There were no buses, and school was miles away. That is when I entered the Notre Dame Convent in Morinville. I had a few visitors, and on occasion a man would come to visit me. It was my dad. I didn't know him very well, if at all. At age seven, my dad came to bring me home from the convent to live with my brothers. Our family was unique to say the least, for here I was among people I hardly knew, let alone going to a different school in a hamlet called Mearns.

This was a very difficult time in our lives. I remember my brothers being picked on. We three were teased incessantly, week after week, year in and year out. After all, we weren't the best-dressed kids in school, with my dad needing to be chore boy, baker, farmer and caregiver to my mom. While my mom was the financial manager of the family, my dad did a lot of physical work. Our school lunches, carried in lard pails, were lard or mustard sandwiches, and on occasion strawberry jam, no cookies, cakes, or fruit. But then we were thankful at least we had lunch.

I learned a lot from my mother. Even though she was bedridden, she would explain to me how to do things. She taught me how to sew a flat felt seam, bleach empty flour sacks and then sew them together to make bed sheets and pillowcases. I also learned how to sew a feather tick to use as a mattress. In the fall I would haul out my bed and empty the straw in order to wash the tick and fill it with newly threshed fresh straw. The more straw I put in, the thicker my mattress was. My brothers' beds were made like mine.

I must have been about 12 years old and I remember Dad cutting a barley field with a horse and binder, us kids would stook the bundles of grain. We would be up late on a bright night and the mice would scurry out from under the bundles. After

a while we would try to fill a three-tine fork with as many mice as we could. Threshing days were quite a sight with all the hay racks, teams of horses hauling in the bundles to the threshing machine, neighbors helping, men and women alike.

Many members of the St. Charles Parish also helped my parents in many ways. They would come over and can meat when Dad butchered an animal. We also had a garden and many a jar of rhubarb and saskatoons were preserved. I remember one spring morning when I went to the barn to watch Dad do chores. We had cows, sheep, goats and chickens. As I went back to the house I jumped over puddles, after all I didn't want to get my new boots dirty. All of sudden something was chasing me. I got so scared I climbed up on Dad's steel wheel McCormick Deering tractor. The ram didn't like me in the barnyard and wanted me out of there. He must have had an awful headache after hitting the tractor wheel.

I remember going to church with the horse and cart. For some reason Dad used it more than the surrey. In wintertime we used the cutter. We would have lots of blankets and when it was really cold, heated stones would help us keep warm. Going to midnight mass was a delightful experience with the sound of the sleigh in the snow, clear skies with shooting stars and moonlight. You could see miles around and the northern lights would sometimes dance around in many different shapes and colors. There were many times when the Altmiks family would drive to church past our house even though it was out of their way. I had many rides to church with them. I joined the church choir and enjoyed it.

My 15th birthday was fast approaching and school was a difficult place to be. I talked with my teacher about school and wanted to quit. There was no encouragement to stay in school; in fact the teacher's comments were quite the opposite. She had no hope in me. This steered me in my decision to quit school. By February the next year, I went to babysit my cousins in Morinville. I also worked as a waitress at the hotel.



Juliette Houle

It was there that I met my future husband, Eugene Vandermeulen, a farm boy from Saskatchewan who came to Alberta to work in the



L to R: Simon Houle, Julie Vandermeulen, George Houle



L to R: Alphonse Houle, Eugene Vandermeulen & Juliette Vandermeulen on their wedding day, George Houle, Simon Houle and Mary Houle (bedridden)

gas and oil industry. We married in St. Charles Church in February 1961. We first lived in Edmonton, then in Riviere Qui Barre. Later we rented Rene Bourbonnais' farm and eventually settled near Busby. We raised four children, Edna, Jeannette, Lynn and Terry. My daughter, Edna, has more to say about our family history, the Eugene Vandermeulen family.

My brother George married a young lady from the United States. She came to Canada with her

father on hunting trips in the fall. After marrying, George and Cindy moved to the USA. George now lives in Vimy, Alberta. My brother Simon stayed at home with my dad. Simon took ill with cancer and died in December 1976 at the age of 36 years old.



Simon Houle meets Johnny Wayne and Frank Schuster at concert in Vancouver



Juliette Houle – photo taken at school reunion August 2004

Hoven, Tim & Lorianne (Stitsen)

By Lorianne Hoven

I was baptized in St. Charles Parish, Mearns in November 1971. My grandparents, Robert and Laura Kieser, were my Godparents. How precious it has been to have my grandparents sponsor me as Godparents, faithfully praying for me for so many years. What a blessing!

While I was growing up, we attended Mass in Mearns quite often. Even though we lived closer to St. Anthony Parish in Busby, Mearns remained a special place for our family since it had been my mother's home parish growing up. My brothers, sisters, and I were always so pleased to attend Mass in Mearns because it meant seeing our grandparents, aunts and uncles. It also meant we would likely

share a delicious chicken dinner at Grandma and Grandpa Kieser's after Mass, with lots of visiting and laughter.



Lorianne (Stitsen) & Tim Hoven Family – 2006. Back: Liam, Aidan. Middle: Joseph, Tim, Therese, Lorianne. Front: Frances & Dominic

We always looked forward to the annual Mearns Church Supper. I remember wanting to go downstairs to visit the fishpond but being so afraid of the cold and dark basement. There was so little light! We were so glad to get safely back upstairs with our little treats!

My sister Corinne and I were to receive our First Holy Communion in our Parish at Busby. It was a cold and blustery day in December of 1978. Disaster struck! The furnace refused to work, sending a whole church full of people to St. Charles in Mearns. What a memorable First Communion that was!

I remember Mearns Church as a very beautiful place – the colored glass windows, the elaborate statues, and grand ceiling. What an inspiring place of prayer! A Christmas highlight of mine would have to be the wonderful Nativity scene. The deep blue of the sky, the stars and the crèche would always captivate me.

On August 14, 1994 in St. Anthony Parish, Busby I married my love, Timothy Hoven. We have been blessed with six beautiful children. Aidan (born 1995), Liam (1996), Therese (1998), Joseph (2000), Francis (2002), and Dominic (2006). After a three year stay in Drayton Valley, we moved back to Tim's family farm and we have been living and working on the farm near Eckville since 1996. We raise organic beef.

How wonderful it is to be able to bring our children to Mearns church; to gather with my extended Kieser family downstairs for supper each

Christmas. What a place of holiness and fond memories!

Hutterite Brethren, Morinville

(By Interview)

In 1971 the Morinville Hutterite Brethren purchased 3,000 acres of land in the Alcomdale-Mearns area. This land on which the colony established their homes and farming business was purchased from Walter Warshawski. At this time, they also purchased nine quarters of land from Emile and Camille Ricard, two quarters from Archie Cameron and the remainder from Harrington, Jarworski and Amsbaugh.

Jacob Wurz (known as Big Jake) the colony boss, moved here from the Sand Hills Colony in the Beisiker area with his wife and four sons; Jake Jr., John, Joe and Ed. They, along with their families, had a total of 45 members. At the time of their move, Jake Jr., also known as Louis, was elected minister in the fall. John held the position of the German schoolteacher; Joe the field boss; and Ed the elder man and hog boss.

All members of the colony may be baptized at the age of 20. Candidates eligible for Baptism go to the elder man, minister and field boss to state their intentions. Before they are baptized, they are instructed by the senior members in their religious beliefs and their duties to the colony. This process takes approximately eight weeks before Baptism can be approved and performed. Baptism is a necessary step before marriage.

The children go to school until the age of 15. Teachers hired by Sturgeon School Division, come from surrounding towns or neighborhoods. Colony children have a German school teacher who teaches one hour each morning in order for them to be able to read and write High German. School starts at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 3:00 p.m. Once the boys are out of school they are trained by the senior members in the various positions of labor on the colony. The boys train in each position for a year so that over a five-year cycle they will have obtained experience in all fields of work. If a boy shows special talent and interest in a specific field of work, they will be chosen to work in this position and at some time later, likely become a future boss. Once the young girls have finished their schooling, they will begin to help wherever they are needed, such as cooking, sewing, baking, gardening, butchering, cleaning or doing outdoor chores. The preschool and the kindergarten children are attended to by three of the women in the colony with special talent for caring for small children.



Aerial photo of Morinville Hutterite Colony



Premier Ralph Klein and MLA Doug Horner visited the Morinville Hutterite Brethren School

In spring, usually the month of May, the field boss designates the jobs that each of their men will do throughout the seasons of spring, summer and fall. If a big job comes up, such as building a new barn, all will generally help with this project.

The young single men of the colony get two weeks of winter vacation. They are given the use of a vehicle to travel from colony to colony to meet other families and young women. They visit and come to know each other. Some court for a couple of years, yet other relationships become more serious and happen more quickly. Young people also meet at weddings, funerals and other special occasions. When a couple decides to get married, they must first ask their parents, their colony, and the girl's colony for permission. After the announcement of the engagement, the wedding date and plans are made for the celebration.

Weddings consist of five days of celebrating. Women enjoy planning and the sewing of dresses for each of the days. The first two days of celebration, which they call the 'Shivaree', are held at the girl's colony. The celebration begins with a spiritual service at 5:30 p.m. followed by a supper at 6:00 p.m. At 8:00 p.m. German wedding hymns are sung and maybe a comedy play is acted out with more singing. Sandwiches, snacks and beer are served. This continues until 11:00 p.m. at which time the older members leave and the young people take over. The next two days of celebrations are held at the man's colony. On Sunday morning, which is the fifth day, a church service is held at 9:30 a.m., followed with the couple exchanging their wedding vows at 10:30 a.m. A big dinner is served to everyone at noon, with more singing and celebrating. Much fun is had by all!

One of the ladies on the colony is the kitchen head cook who decides and plans the meal menus. Another lady acts as cook alongside her. Each week a new lady takes on this position, which enables all women to take turns cooking.

When a young woman has a baby she is able to refrain from work for ten weeks. The dairy boss's wife usually cooks for her and brings in her meals. The menu is specially suited to her and usually consists of homemade chicken soup and other special dishes. The mother or a relative of the new mom comes from her home colony to help out with the baby and spend four weeks of time with her. The same happens when members have surgery or sickness in the family. "A very secure way of living", states Edna Wurz. After ten weeks at home with her new baby, the new mom slowly gets back into the usual work routine.

Funerals for deceased members take place over

a three-day period: two days of 'wakes', with a funeral on the third day. Relatives and friends come from colonies in South Dakota, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and other Alberta home colonies.

Church ministers are chosen by all baptized male members. Three men are chosen from the congregation as candidates for the position of minister. Before the selection process begins, there are many spiritual events that lead up to the voting process. The final selection is made by a draw from the hat. Three pieces of paper are put into the hat, two of the papers are left blank and a third has the word 'minister' written on it. Before a draw is made, the head bishop will pronounce a special prayer and the candidate that draws the paper 'minister' takes up the new minister position. Mike was chosen minister by this process in 1990. Mike had his father Louie with him for 14 years in which to help guide and direct him as he took up the position of minister. A colony boss is voted into his position by all baptized male members.

As a colony grows and reaches 130 members, a decision is made to divide and form another colony. First the colony looks for more land to buy. Once the land is purchased, the new farm is worked along with the home colonies to start a cash flow. Half of the men are taken to help build new barns and houses. Each colony usually has two ministers so that when a split in the colony is discussed, each minister puts his name on a board and every man is able to place his name under one minister or the other. The split can happen when the men are fairly evenly divided between the ministers. When the split happens, two papers reading 'to stay' or 'to leave' are placed into a hat. The oldest minister is the first to choose. The minister who picks the paper 'to leave' must go with his group to the new colony. A mechanic, electrician, plumber, field boss, dairy boss, hog boss, and all essential members must be part of each new division. Building barns is the first priority and then later houses are built.

Each year as harvest is completed, a 'Harvest Feast' is held. Beer and special dishes of food are served.

To date, there are 23 families living in the Alcomdale Colony with a total of 120 members. Agricultural commodities held at the Alcomdale Colony:

- 80 herd dairy
- 800 head beef cattle
- 6,500 acres of land
- 20,000 sheep
- 50 hogs/sows – farrow to finish
- 160 acres potatoes – rotated every third year
- 10 acre garden/farmers market

Important dates at the Alcomdale Colony:

1918 – Hutterites arrived in Jamesville, South Dakota
1971 – Arrived in Alcomdale/Mearns area
1972 – Chicken barn burned (not even a year old)
July 9, 1981 – Jake Wurz (Sr.) passed away
1981 – John became Boss
1990 – Mike became second Minister
November 18, 1991 – Kitchen burned
April 30, 2000 – Joe retired
May 7, 2000 – George voted in for Field Boss
2001 – Tractor burned in the pit
January 23, 2003 – John retired as Financial Secretary
January 26, 2003 – John (Jr.) became Financial Secretary
May 13, 2003 – Hog barn burned (only 1 sow lived and later had a litter of 8 piglets)
September 18, 2004 – Jake (Louie) passed away and Mike became Senior Minister

Jaworski, Joe & Janina

By daughters Stella & Phyllis

Joe Jaworski came to Canada from Poland in the 1920's and met Demetro Dziedusiewicz in Edmonton. They ended up in Alcomdale working for various farmers in the area. Eventually they each bought a quarter section of land, one mile west and half a mile south of Alcomdale.

Janina Staviski came to Canada from Poland in the late 1920's and worked for the Aslin family, half a mile south of Alcomdale. It was quite trying, as Polish was her only language and that made communication difficult. Joe and Janina were married in 1931 and continued farming in the area. They had two daughters, Stella and Phyllis. Demetro lived on the farm until his death.

Joe passed away on September 1, 1943 at an early age after undergoing surgery. Janina continued to live on the farm with her two daughters.

Stella and Phyllis attended school in Alcomdale and were involved in various activities such as softball, movies in the Alcomdale Hall and Saturday night dances. Stella and Phyllis played on the Alcomdale girls' softball team and enjoyed playing ball at picnics in different towns. In the winter we recall hauling water to flood the skating rink from various wells in Alcomdale. We also have fond memories of going skating at Oleckow's where Mrs. Oleckow would have buckets of water in her house to warm our feet, especially Phyllis' feet because her first pair of borrowed skates had no toes. We, along with the Harrington family, later skated on Egg Lake, which was a big treat, as it was smoother

even though the ice cracked at times. No one ever fell through – lucky, as it was very deep.

The track meets were a big part of the school year and we even won some ribbons and trophies. Stella especially enjoyed all the track meet events. The meets were held in different towns such as Westlock, Pickardville, Legal, and of course Alcomdale.

Stella attended the school in Alcomdale until Grade 11 and then went to Edmonton and took a business course at Alberta College. Phyllis also attended Alcomdale School until Grade 10 then attended Eastglen High School in Edmonton.

Our mother, Janina, married Tony Pietrasz in 1952 and moved to Edmonton. They have one son, John who lives in Kelowna, B.C. and has three children: Janelle, Jared and Jocelyn.

Tony passed away on February 16, 1984 and Janina passed away on September 2, 1994.

Stella married Alvin Pearson in 1951 and they have three children: Lynn, Doug and Lois. They have five grandchildren and one great grandchild. Lynn and Lois live in Edmonton and Doug lives in Fort Saskatchewan. Alvin passed away on April 3, 2004

Phyllis married Harold Brown in 1959 and they have three children: Sandra, David and Neil. They have seven grandchildren and they all live in Edmonton.

On July 30, 2005 Phyllis, Stella and Betty Melton (Harrington) attended the Alcomdale reunion, which was nice to meet people they hadn't seen in 50 years. Stella and Phyllis continue to enjoy the fond memories of Alcomdale and area.

Keehn, Arnold & Louisa

By Arnold Keehn

I, Arnold Keehn, was born December 10, 1937 in Troyna, Poland of German descent. I am the son of Wanda and Wilhelm Keehn. I was raised in Bloomsbury, Alberta and went to school in Camp Creek, Bloomsbury and Barrhead.

I moved to Edmonton in 1955 and worked in construction, was a CNR locomotive fireman and worked for the Edmonton City Fire Department.

In June 1966 I began my career with Greyhound Lines. In 1986 I bought the NE¹/₄ 18-56-26-W4th from Mrs. Cecil Durand.

In April 1989 I married Louisa Pyper who was employed with AGT in Edmonton. Louisa is the daughter of Ernie and Dorothy Harrison of Mystery Lake. She received her schooling at Mystery Lake, Little Port and Barrhead.

We raised cattle and grew grain and Louisa



The Keehn Family – L to R: Dean Pyper, Raymond Keehn, Arnold Keehn, Louisa Keehn, Danica Raymond, Michelé Henley. Wanda Meier and Jennifer Harrison in front.

looked after the livestock while I was on the road. Louisa retired from AGT in November 1993.

We bought a house in St. Albert in April 1996 and spent a year there. We missed country living so we sold the house, developed a new building site and moved back to the farm in July 1997. In 2001 we subdivided an acreage and sold the farm to my daughter and her husband, Marc and Michelé Henley.

In October 2001 I retired from Greyhound with over 35 years of service.

We have a blended family. I have a son, Raymond, who married Michelle Gaudet and they have two children, Jordana and Brett. They live in Edmonton. My daughter, Michelé, is married to Marc Henley and they have three children, Wanda, Raymond and Sheldon.

Louisa has a daughter, Danica, who is married to Richard Raymond and they have three children, Matthew, Gabrielle and Josée. They live in Barrhead. She also has a son, Dean Pyper who lives in Chatham, Ontario.

Louisa and I are now hobby farming on our acreage and are enjoying retirement and living in this community.

Keehn, Michelé & Marc

By Michelé

Arnold Keehn, Michelé's father, bought the Morris and Cecil Durand farm (56220 Hwy44) from Cecil Durand and family in 1986. Arnold and his daughter Michelé lived and farmed together from 1986 to 1989. Arnold married Louisa Pyper in 1989. They farmed until about 1997 when they moved to St. Albert. They came back about a year later and built on four acres of that quarter.

Michelé Keehn and her children lived in the main house from 1997 until present. Michelé's

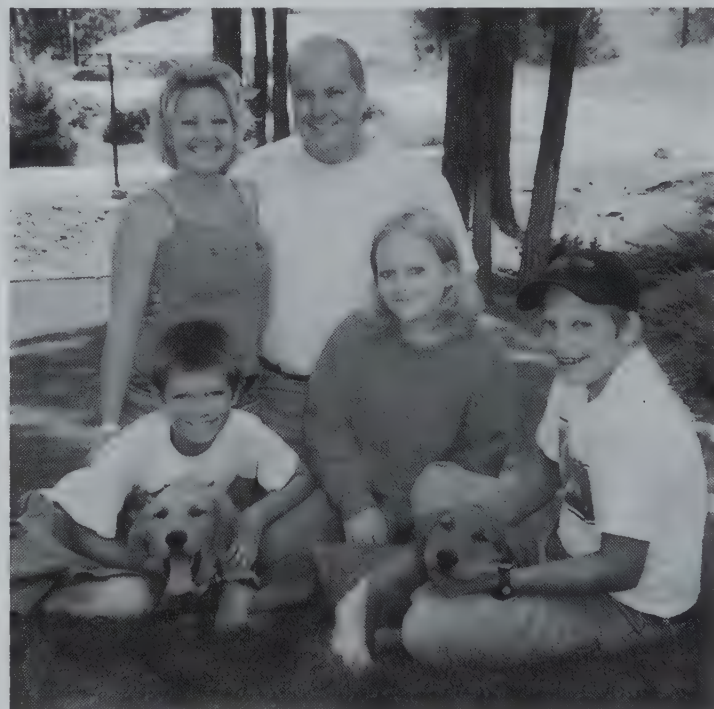
children are Wanda-Jean Meier (1986) born in Provost, Raymond Robert Meier (1987) born in St. Albert, and Sheldan Ashton Betchuk (1991) born in St. Albert.

Michelé married Marc Henley in 2001 in the Dominican Republic. They bought the farm from Michelé's father, Arnold Keehn, in 2002.

Michelé and Marc made a lot of changes on the farm, as did Arnold and Louisa. One to mention,



1989 – Arnold Keehn with daughter, Michele Keehn-Henley and grandchildren Robert Meier and Wanda Meier.



Michelé and Marc Henley, Sheldon, Wanda, and Raymond with pets Brandi and Brodi – 2002

from past history, is the old livery stable from the days of the Klondike Trail. It had to be torn down in 2002 because it was unsafe.

My family history links me, Michelé Fay Keehn, with my grandmother, Jeanne Marie Paridis (Burgess was her married name) and to her parents, Raoul Telefone Paridis and Marie Doria Foisy – the same Paridis/Foisy family from the Villeneuve and Riviere Qui Barre families. My grandma spent a lot of time out here with that line of her family. I'm not totally sure of all the names from there. I've sent my grandmother's family tree and some Foisy and Paridis information to see if a connection can be matched up with other Foisy/Paridis families.



Marc & Michelé Henley – May 9, 2001

Keller, Craig & Corinne

By Corinne Keller

Craig and Corinne Keller (Stitsen) were married September 24, 1998 at St. Andrew's Catholic Church in Edmonton. They have three children,



Craig and Corinne Keller with children L to R: Nathan, Andrew, and Laura – Photo taken 2004

Nathan, Laura and Andrew. Corinne was raised in the Busby area and attended mass at St. Anthony's Church but, because Mearns was her mom's (Claire Stitsen) home parish and the parish of her grandparents (Robert and Laura Kieser), she celebrated the sacraments of Baptism and First Communion at St. Charles Catholic Church in Mearns. She remembers many very special Christmas and Easter celebrations at St. Charles Church and the Fall Suppers in the Mearns Hall basement. They continue to attend St. Charles Parish when home visiting her family.

Kerckhof, Leopold & Alice

By Leopold & Alice



Alice and Leopold Kerckhof

We were both born in Belgium. Pol arrived in Canada in 1952. We were then married in Belgium in 1955 and moved to Canada to start farming in the Mearns/ Morinville area.

In 1956 we bought our farm where we still reside. We are now retired but still live at the same place.

We have nine children: Maria (Debusschere), Jozef, Andre, Godelieve (Kryger), Anna-Marie (Brown), Rose-Marie (Kohlman) Rita (Foot), Martina (Rouault) and Georges.

We also have 31 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Kieser, Dale

By Dale Kieser

My memories of Mearns are turkey suppers, fish pond, Father McGrane and his boat the Jonguiere, walkathons, driving in the car while following Ronnie who was participating, Midnight Mass, being an altar boy, being a server and ringing the bells in the choir loft.

These are my memories.

Kieser, Robert & Laura

By Laura Kieser

My husband, Robert, was born in his parent's home to Bill and Clara Kieser south-east of Morinville on August 23, 1923. He was the third child of a family of nine, six boys and three girls – George, Mary, Robert, Irene, Richard, Alfred, Mildred (who passed away at eight months), Norman and Freddie.

I was also born at home east of St. Albert to Aime and Clara VanBrabant, the third child of a family of six, four boys and two girls – Romain, Albert, Laura, Andrew, Madeline and Maurice.

We met each other at a community dance in St. Albert. From there our love for each other kept blooming. We got married on August 8, 1951. Our first home was a quarter section south east of Morinville where we rented for eight years from his Uncle Joe Shaffers hoping to buy the place but since this did not happen we had to look elsewhere. We were fortunate to buy a quarter section near Mearns for \$8,000 in the spring of 1958. The following year we moved to our new place. We already had four children.

Claire was six years old and born August 26, 1952. She is married to Tony Stitsen and they have seven children. They live on a dairy farm near Busby.

Joyce was four years old and born March 4,

1954. She is married to Marvin Brenneis and they have three children. They live on an acreage near Mearns.

Gordon was three years old and born April 22, 1955. He is married to Fran Doblanko and they have five children. They have a son who passed away at the age of three. They live on a farm near Mearns.

Marlene was a one year old and born September 25, 1957. She was married to Klaus Gendermann and had two children. She is presently married to David Andrews who has two children as well.

Our new farm was really run down as the owner Anna Beaudry had not lived there for some years. There were fences to be made, buildings to repair, a shelterbelt to be planted, etc.

In 1965 we bought another quarter section for \$16,000 from Wilfred Rottot just north of our first quarter and there was also a lot of cleaning to be done. In this same year we also built onto our house as we had two more children.

Ronald was born January 11, 1962. He was married to Cindy Satre and had one child. He is presently married to Karen Sullivan who has three children. They live in Legal.

Dale was born August 3, 1965. He is married to Lorna Bokenfohr and they have three children. They live in St. Albert.

Now we had six children who kept us very busy with all their activities – taking them to music



Robert and Laura Kieser family photo taken in 1988 Back row L to R: Dale, Ron, Gordon; Middle row L to R: Joyce, Claire, Marlene; Front row: Laura and Robert

lessons, being a hockey coach and taking them to hockey, to youth meetings, etc. It seems we always had a house full of kids.

Robert was also on the Manawan Drainage Board for about eighteen years, was on the church board, and was a member of the Knights of Columbus. I became a member of the C.W.L., which was my outing once a month. I received my forty-year membership pin in 2000. We enjoy being involved with the community and with the church.

Robert would do a lot of carpentering after building our chicken barn. He helped build August Bokenfohr's barn and machine shed, Aurel Durocher's turkey barn at \$2.00 an hour. He helped build Herman Bokenfohr's barn at \$2.00-\$2.25 an hour. He worked two years for Connery and Web Construction, building houses in Morinville starting at \$8.00 an hour. He also helped build the Senior Lodge in Morinville. He was the caretaker for the arenas in Morinville and Riviere Qui Barre for some years. He helped build John Polakovits' pig barn and Henry Schafers' house.

Before working out, chores had to be done at home in the morning and in the evening with the help of his wife and children such as milking cows, feeding pigs, chickens and broilers. There were a few years when we even had turkeys. For the first few years milking was done by hand and the last five years we progressed to a milking machine. The milk went through an electric separator to separate the cream from the milk. The separator and milking machine had to be washed every day. The cream was put into cream cans and put into a stock tank to keep it cool. After that the Alberta Dairy Pool would pick up the cream twice a week. We welcomed these cream cheques to pay for our groceries and household expenses.

In 1981 Robert started working at the Consolidated Cement Plant in Villeneuve for eight years but in between he would still do carpenter work. He helped our children build their houses. In 1980 he helped our daughter Claire and her husband build their dairy barn with family help and neighbors. This was a very big project. This was all done in between farming.

After all the children started leaving home, the animals were sold and we kept only laying hens, which were kept in cages. We had an egg route, which we really enjoyed for many years until our last son left. Now that the children have left I started doing something that I liked doing and that was working in the greenhouse. I also did home care – working with the seniors, which I really enjoyed.

Robert and I joined the floor curling in

Morinville, going to tournaments. We started our floor curling in Mearns and really enjoy getting together with other seniors.

In 1996 our team, Robert and myself, Dan Bouchard and Leonard Brenneis were lucky to come in first in our area and zone. We were able to go to participate at the Summer Games in St. Paul. This was a wonderful experience where thousands gathered to play off in all different events from all over Alberta. It was like a mini-Olympics!

We love to go visiting with our family and friends, play cards, especially with our children and grandchildren and visit with our great grandchildren. This is now our joy and pleasure.



Robert and Laura Kieser. Photo taken 1998

Through all the years and times of struggling to make a living my husband and I would always end the day with prayer, saying the Family Rosary with our children. Prayer was our strength through all the good times and bad. We always believed in the power of prayers, making Sunday a special day, packing the children up to go to church to worship God and giving Him thanks and praise for all His blessings. This faith I would like to pass on to our children, our grandchildren and our great-grandchildren. We now have twenty-five grandchildren and fifteen great-grandchildren and two more in the year 2006.

We celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary in 2001 with our wonderful family. God has really blessed us.

Robert has since passed away, in March of 2007 but left us with these, his memories of Mearns:

"The neighbors around were great to work with. When I farmed Bugnet's land, I could never bring



Robert and Laura Kieser with their grandchildren. Photo taken in 1997

my lunch along because Laurette Bugnet said she would always feed me lunch and supper. She was a wonderful cook and a lovely person.

I remember building a granary for Henry Schafers and I had to tie him to the rafters while we were sheeting the roof because he was scared of heights. The next morning I came there, he was standing among the rafters and said "Look Robert, no rope!"

I had the fun of making moonshine with my friends Eli Lirondelle, Eddie Vandenhouten and Henry Schafers. I can tell all this now because all my buddies have passed away. I'm sure I won't be jailed for the crime at 83 years old. The first time I made it, it was in a crock in the bedroom closet. It smelled strong and we sometimes felt on edge about it all. I can laugh now about it."

Kirvan, Mark & Dawn

By Dawn Kirvan

Mark Kieran Kirvan was born in Guelph, Ontario on April 30, 1947, and lived there throughout his childhood, eventually beginning a teaching career in Port Elgin, Ontario. He came west to continue teaching in 1981 at St. Augustine School in Ponoka and then moved to Legal in 1982 when he began teaching at Notre Dame School in Morinville.

Dawn Allynn Whitten was born into an Air Force family in Vancouver on January 17, 1958, and lived in such places as Ottawa, Victoria and Winnipeg. She began her teaching career in Smithers, B.C., returned to Ottawa to complete a Master's Degree and came west again in 1982 to teach at the Alexander Reserve.

The two met when Adam, a foster child Dawn

was caring for, was placed in Mark's class. Dawn and Mark married on June 11, 1983 and have resided in Mearns ever since.

Their home, the former convent of the School Sisters of Notre Dame built in 1948, located right next door to St. Charles Parish Church, had first come to Dawn's attention when she was looking for a place to rent upon arrival in the area. A year later it remained for sale and so the couple happily purchased it. The large home, with many wood features, reminded Mark of the home he had been raised in;

and Dawn was attracted to its resemblance to her grandmother's home in Victoria. Both felt its five bedrooms would well accommodate a family.

Paul Francis Kirvan was born on July 16, 1984, Helen Anne on December 7, 1986 and Julia Marie on May 25, 1995. All the births took place in St. Albert and all three children were baptized and received their First Communion, First Reconciliation and Confirmation at St. Charles.



Kirvan family – on the occasion of Julia's Confirmation, March 12, 2006. L to R: Helen, Dawn, Mark, Paul and in the foreground Rosy (dog) and Julia

Through the 1980s and early 90s, Mark and Dawn worked at Notre Dame School in Morinville and Paul and Helen attended the French Immersion program at Morinville schools. In 1995 local school boards regionalized and Mark, Dawn, Paul and Helen all transferred to schools in St. Albert. Mark taught grade four at Albert Lacombe School and then moved to Vital Grandin Catholic School, teaching grades three, four and six over the years. Dawn taught grade two part time at Vital Grandin and then

went on to division office, eventually becoming the Religious Education and Christian Family Life Consultant for St. Albert Catholic Schools.

Paul and Helen graduated from St. Albert Catholic High School and continued on to the University of Alberta. Paul graduated in Engineering Physics in 2007 before entering Medical Physics at the Cross Cancer Institute. Helen attended the Faculty of Business, studying accounting and human resources. Julia attended the French Immersion program at Ecole Marie Poburan and Ecole Secondaire Ste- Marguerite d'Youville in St. Albert.

Not having been raised in the country, Mark and Dawn were grateful to receive support from their neighbors regarding such things as septic and well systems, home renovations and gardening tips. They enjoyed their half-acre, raising small animals such as ducks, geese, guinea pigs, cats and a dog. The large vegetable garden and several flower beds were always part of the summer picture. Beehives arrived on the scene, producing as much as 250 pounds of honey in a season.

The large crabapple tree south of the house was a source of countless jars of jelly, very sour juice experiments, apple butter and even some crabapple liquor, as well as being a delight to all parishioners each spring when it was covered with masses of white blossoms.

Over the years, Dawn and Mark made many changes to the old house including updating the plumbing and electricity, remodeling the kitchen, adding another bathroom and finishing the basement.

The rural setting of the Kirvan home, surrounded by flat fields and graced by many large trees in the yard, is a beautiful setting for the nature-related hobbies pursued by the family. The Kirvans are avid birdwatchers and enjoy seeing the mule and white-tailed deer, hare and foxes which frequent the neighborhood. Over the years, one bear was reported and one raccoon, which must have arrived on a train or truck, was spotted.

Many dark clear nights made excellent conditions for astronomy, with viewing of planets, constellations and the northern lights being a highlight of many evenings. Dawn considered it a bonus when astronomy could be done from indoors. Some evenings Venus, Uranus, Mars, Jupiter and the moon could all be seen from the living room windows. She did have to go outside to see the moons of Jupiter through the telescope. The comet Hale-Bopp, the transit of Venus, and lunar eclipses were other heavenly highlights.

The Kirvans are active members of the Mearns community. Family members served in all St. Charles Parish ministries over the years. Dawn

taught nursery school and gymnastics at the old school, which was used as a gathering place for many years, before community functions moved to the newly renovated church basement.

Kluthe, Aloysius (Aloys/Alvin) & Frances

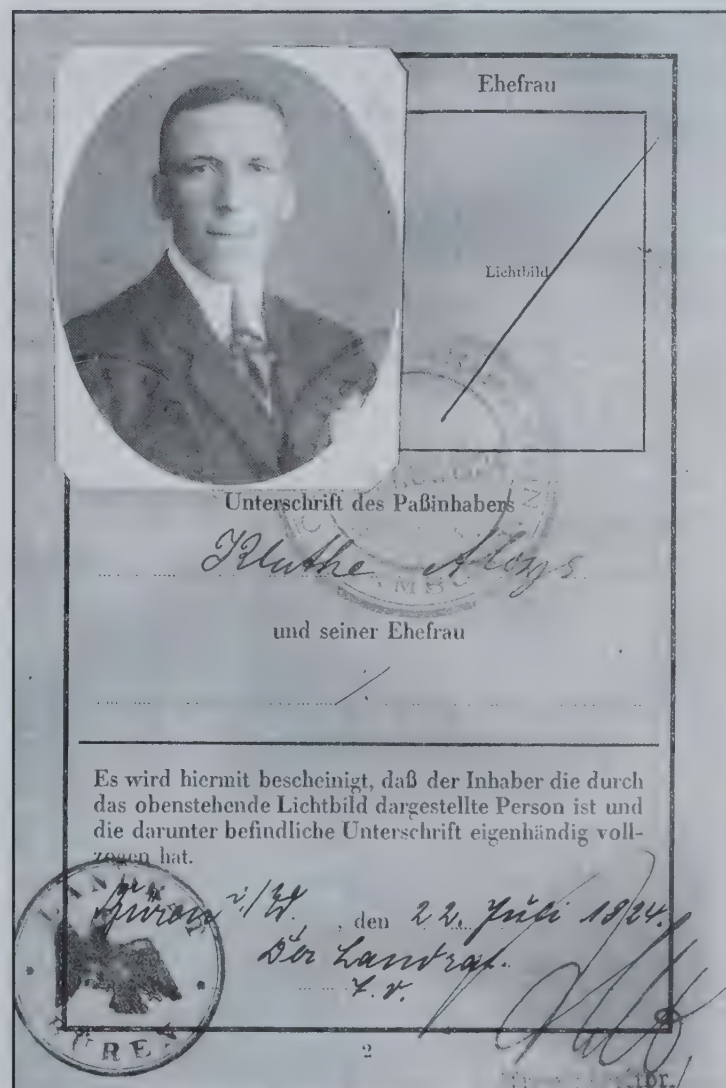
By Yvonne Kluthe (Sabourin)

Aloysius (Aloys/Alvin) Kluthe was born

November 9, 1898 in the town of Brenken, Westfalia, Germany to parents who were farming. Because of the abundance of available land in Alberta, he came to Canada in 1924 at the age of 25. He met his two brothers Joseph and August who were already here in the Morinville and St. Albert districts. He worked in bush camps and as a



Frances Kluthe at age 20.
Photo taken June 1908



1924 Passport of Aloys Kluthe at age 25

labourer in the area. Aloysius married the widowed Frances Hesse, daughter of Joseph and Elizabeth Kluthe of St. Albert, on June 7, 1927. Frances was born in Orient, Faulk County, South Dakota. She had four children prior to the death of her first husband. They were named Joseph, Leonard, John and Mary. Her son John died in childhood.

Aloys and Frances had a son who they named John Joseph Kluthe (John J.). He was born on December 2, 1928 at Volmer and attended school at Roseridge for a few years.

Aloys received his Canadian Certificate of Naturalization in 1934. During the Second World War, Aloys, of German descent, was required to report monthly to the Registrar of Alien Enemies at Morinville and was not allowed to possess any guns nor leave the area without having his Certificate endorsed.

Aloys continued to farm on the Hesse farm in the Volmer district until 1936 when the family moved northwest of Morinville. John J. then attended Tellier School, travelling by horseback. The school was located two and a half miles from home.

Aloys originally leased land from Georgianna Steffes, the widow of Joe Steffes. The leased land was the 320 acres located on E 24-56-26-W4. The lease was in place for four years starting April 1, 1936 with first chance to purchase. A tractor was purchased at a cost of \$425.00 in April of 1936. The land was purchased in 1940 from Georgianna Steffes. Aloys purchased an additional 160 acres of land from Donat Hews in 1944. The purchased land was NW 24-56-26-W4. He farmed cooperatively with his brothers Joe and August for many years until their offspring were older.

Aloys had a finger amputated due to a stoneboat incident in February 1941. The medical cost of the hospital was \$4.00 per day, with an operating room charge of \$5.00.

John J. married Yvonne Sabourin in St. Charles Church in Mearns on June 8, 1954. John J. and Yvonne farmed and took over running the farm after Aloys had a stroke in 1956.

Aloys died on August 30, 1969 at the Youville Home in St. Albert, two years after his retirement. Frances had died in August 1964.



DESCRIPTION SIGNALEMENT		
Profession } Profession }	FARMER BRENKEN	
Place and date of birth } Lieu et date de naissance }	WESTFALIA GERMANY 9 NOVEMBER 1898	
Residence } Résidence }	CANADA	
Height } Taille }	6 FT.	
Colour of eyes } Couleur des yeux }	BROWN	
Colour of hair } Couleur des cheveux }	GREY	
Visible peculiarities } Signes particuliers }		
CHILDREN — ENFANTS		
Name Nom	Date of birth Date de naissance	Sex Sexe

Aloys Kluthe's Canadian Passport, issued Nov. 5, 1952

GASOLINE LICENCE and RATION COUPON BOOK	
SPECIAL	CATEGORY A 1945 1946
S 61040	CATÉGORIE
<i>Emboittelles</i>	For Motor Vehicle Licence Plate No.
OIL CONTROLLER FOR CANADA RÉGISEUR DES HUILES POUR LE CANADA	77806
PERMIS D'ESSENCE et COUPONS DE RATIONS	

Gasoline License and Ration Coupon Book 1945/46

Cabin Class EMBARKATION CARD Einschiffungskarte	
S.S. AMERICA	
Sailing=Date:	10. Mrz 1953
Abfahrts=Datum:	
Accommodation	A 48/2
Schiffsplatz	
Mr. Aloys Kluthe	

Aloys Kluthe's Embarkation Card, 1953

Westlock, Alberta		April 28 1944	
Mrs. Aloys Kluthe for John Mounville			
In account with . .			
Immaculata Hospital SISTERS OF CHARITY			
Apr. 24 - 28			
To Hospital Attendance at \$3.00 per day			
4 days		\$ 12.00	
Use of Operating Room		10.00	
Dressings			
Medicines			
Laboratory Examinations		2.00	
Extras		\$ 24.00	
Less M. D. Discount			
4 days @ 75¢		3.00	
		\$ 21.00	
PRIVATE WARD FEES STRICTLY PAYABLE IN ADVANCE			

Immaculata Hospital bill for an appendectomy, April 28, 1944

Kluthe, August & Josephine

By the Kluthe family

August & Josephine Kluthe settled on SE 35-26-56-W4. The story begins long before they settled in the Mearns area. In 1979 Tracy (Kluthe) Brown wrote the following history as related to her by her grandfather.

August Kluthe was born in Brenken, Germany in 1905 on July 21. His parents were John Kluthe and Theresa Villies. August was the seventh child. He had four older brothers and two older sisters. They are: George, Theresa, John, Alvin, Joseph, Louise and then August. Three years later in 1908 another brother Willhelm was born. Six weeks after Willie was born, their mother died. His oldest sister Theresa, being eighteen at the time, took charge of the household and cared for her younger brothers and sisters.

In the year 1923 Joseph Kluthe of St. Albert, a second cousin of August's father, came to Brenken.



Back row L to R: Josephine, August, Lawrence, Betty. Front row L to R: Lucy, Willie, Herman. Photo taken in 1948

Joseph suggested that the Kluthe boys immigrate to Canada where there was cheap land and lots of opportunity. Joseph offered to pay their fare and when they reached Canada they were to work for him to pay back the money. In the fall of 1923 Joe, August's brother left for Canada with his cousins John Meyer and Fritz Altmiks.

August was only seventeen and to go to Canada he had to be twenty-one so his father and Joseph Kluthe (of St. Albert) had to sign for him, saying that if he couldn't make a living in Canada they would pay for his return. Before he left Germany, August planted a tree in front of his home. That tree survived until 1974 when it had to be removed. Another was planted in its place by his nephew John Kluthe who now owns the land.

August and his sister Theresa left for Canada in May 1924. They left by ship from Hamburg and arrived three weeks later in Montreal. He was seasick throughout the whole trip. From Montreal they traveled west by train to Edmonton.

In the fall of 1924 Alvin Kluthe came to Canada with Alvin Altmiks. August, Theresa and Alvin worked for Joseph Kluthe for one year as was agreed upon. For that year's work they each received \$300.00. The next summer August worked for John Kluthe who was Joseph Kluthe's son in St. Albert. Then in the winter August and Alvin Altmiks went to work in a lumber camp. They left by train to Glenevis and stayed in the station that night. In the

morning they walked twenty-five miles to the lumber camp. They worked for one dollar a day plus room and board and they stayed until April.

In the spring of 1926 August and his brothers, Alvin and Joe, rented land in the Volmer area from Mrs. Hesse, a widow. Mrs. Francis Hesse was a daughter of Joseph Kluthe of St. Albert. Alvin Kluthe married Francis Hesse in 1927. They cleared ten acres of land and seeded wheat, receiving two dollars a bushel for it. With that money they bought their first car. While they were renting at Volmer, they bought a quarter section of land near Mearns in 1927. The quarter was bought from Joe Houle for \$5,200 and none of the land was broken so they spent the following winters cutting brush on their land and working summers on the rented land.

In 1929 August and Joe bought a half section from Mr. Brown for \$11,500.

Josephine Thomas was born in Saskatchewan on January 19, 1912 to Malvina Germin & John Thomas. Josephine's father died in 1931 and her mother remarried in 1932 to Leo Rolf.

That same year Josephine moved to Edmonton from Saskatchewan. Her mother and sisters followed in the spring of 1933 following the death of Leo Rolf, their stepfather. Mother and daughters ran a restaurant in Edmonton. Shortly afterwards, on a Sunday drive in the country, the girls Emma, Josephine, Mary and Anastasia were introduced to the Kluthe farm and then the Altmiks farm. The rest, as they say, is history.

In 1935 wedding bells rang. Joe Kluthe married Emma Thomas in January. On April 23rd, in a double wedding ceremony, August Kluthe married Josephine Thomas and Alvin Altmiks married Mary Thomas. There were snowdrifts across the road when Joe drove them to the church with horses pulling a grain box on the sleigh. During the ceremony a Chinook came and when they left the church the roads were getting muddy.

August and Josephine lived with Joe and Emma that summer. In the fall the crops froze. After harvest, August and Josephine moved into their own home.

In January 1936 Josephine gave birth at home to a girl. The baby did not live. That summer they were hailed out. On January 10, 1937, they had a son Lawrence, born in the hospital in Edmonton. August went to see his wife and son at the hospital. Upon returning home he found half the chickens had frozen to death. That summer they were hailed out again. On December 21, 1939, a daughter Elizabeth (Betty) was born.

The outbreak of the Second World War meant August was classified as an enemy alien and had to



A 1963 photo of Josephine and August Kluthe in the garden

report weekly to the postmaster of his whereabouts. This meant going to Mearns, a distance of three and a half miles. During the war years, there was a derailment near Mearns in which sabotage was suspected. In the investigation that followed, the postmaster vouched for the innocence of the Kluthe boys.

In 1942 August undertook to build a new home for his family. It contained some of the new conveniences such as running water, indoor plumbing and electricity. A year later, a son William was born on December 13, 1943. Two years later, on September 14, 1945, Herman was born.



The August and Josephine Kluthe Family. Standing L to R: Lawrence, Herman, Rosemarie, Willie, John-Norman. Sitting L to R: Marilyn, August, Josephine, Betty

More land NE 35-56-26-W4 was purchased that same year from Wilfred Rottot for \$6,000.00. In the following years, three more children were born: two daughters, Rosemarie (born January 13, 1949) and Marilyn (born May 13, 1951), and a son, John Norman (born December 17, 1952).

August acquired the balance of section 35 from Cyril Cloutier for \$9,000.00. He had purchased the northwest quarter from Joe Houle in 1953 for \$4,500.00. August and Josephine farmed the land until 1977.

In 1975-76 August and Josephine built a house on the Egg Lake School site for their retirement. August passed away from heart failure in 1983 and Josephine suffered from Alzheimer's until her death at the Norwood Extended Care Centre in 1991.

Lawrence married Simone Ouimet.

Elizabeth (Betty) married Roger Skayman in February 1964. They currently live in Edmonton where they raised their four children, Wanda, Michael, Sandra and Tanya.

Willie married Johanna (Susie) Holzer in December 1964. They farmed and raised their children Shelley, Todd, Sherry and Travis.

Herman married Dilys Cassidy in May 1969 and they reside in Whitehorse, Yukon. They have a daughter Geri and a son Quentin.

Rosemarie married Roy Auger in May 1970. They raised their children in Fort Saskatchewan. Their children are a daughter Leah, and two sons, Troy and Cory. Roy passed away in March 1999.

Marilyn married Terry Christiansen on October 16, 1981. They both work for the City of Edmonton Police Department. They have two children, a son Stephen and a daughter Katie.



One of many of Josie Kluthe's beautifully decorated wedding cakes. This one was done for Joe and Helena Kluthe's wedding in 1944

John Norman and his wife Carol moved into August & Josephine's farmhouse after their wedding on June 4, 1977. John and Carol continued to farm the land and run a hog operation. Their two children are Jeffrey Thomas, born September 3, 1978, and Nancy Jacqueline, born April 10, 1981. The old house is still standing, however, John and Carol built a new house on the quarter in 1991 where they lived until 2001. John now lives in Red Deer.

Lawrence and Melissa Lirondelle purchased the original homestead in 2004.

Kluthe, Bob & Laura

By Bob Kluthe

To start, I'd have to say I grew up in a great family in a great community. I loved the freedom that living on the farm provided, and in hindsight, I even loved the chores involved. Some of my fondest memories are going mousin' with my pellet gun and my dog, Pug. He was just a little white dog that was part Pug dog, and I think he loved it just as much as me. Get home from school, mix a huge glass of chocolate milk, have a couple peanut butter sandwiches, and then go mousin'.

I really did enjoy the chores too, which in my case was milking a couple of cows by hand. Whether by myself or with my brothers Ryan and Kevin, it was a peaceful activity if you don't count spraying the cats, the odd kick at the bucket by one of the cows, or Ryan throwing the odd lump of dirt



Bob and Laura Kluthe married July 1993

at me. It may have been a little hard to get out in the bitter cold some mornings, but those mornings provided some of my clearest memories.

I suppose the reason for my fond memories of childhood is that there was no question that I felt loved. Janet, Chris, Kevin, Judy, and Ryan are all great siblings, and they continue to be to this day. Dad was a pillar. There was nobody I looked up to more, and he led by example, better than anyone I know. He expected high moral standards from us, and he 'showed' us what that meant. He was a man of honor, and he was a man of his word. If I can become half the man he was, then I'll count myself a success. And Mom, what can I say about Mom! She always was, and continues to be, an absolutely fantastic Mom. She always has a little twinkle in her eye, and like Dad, she led and continues to lead by example. She truly knows the difference between right and wrong, and she works tirelessly. To this day, I often tell people that my mom can still outwork me, and she can still finish a long day's work with a smile on her face. Mom, Dad, and each one of my brothers and sisters have always shown me love. We may not be a huggy, kissy family, but there is no doubt we love each other.

Some of my other fond memories are things like 4-H, dirt biking, and hockey. I'll admit that I wasn't the most earnest of 4-H members, but I did like the cheque at the end. That cheque helped me to fund some of my joys such as dirt biking. Whether riding in the Egg Lake Coal Mine hills with our cousins the Kluthes or with Lawrence "Gump" Lirondelle or just riding around the farm, it always gave me a great feeling of freedom. Hockey was also a great activity and a passion. Whether playing a 'bang em up' game in our basement with my brothers and cousins or playing for Riviere Qui Barre and later the Calahoo Scorpions, it was always fun. I played about eight years as a goaltender and after wrecking my right knee I finished my hockey career playing forward one last year with Calahoo. Locker room camaraderie and being a part of a team and something bigger than yourself was always fun.

Friends are important, and my best friends growing up were Lawrence Lirondelle, Loran Friedrich, and Todd Mahe. While I don't see Loran or Todd very often anymore, I still get a chance to see Lawrence a fair bit, and I consider him my best friend to this day.

After graduating high school in 1987, I headed to the University of Alberta and that's where I met the love of my life, Laura Kincaid.

Laura and I were married in 1993, two years after we met. We moved to Camrose and have since had two great kids, Cole and Paige. Laura had two

extremely difficult pregnancies but the Lord worked some miracles and we have two happy, healthy children. Don't your own kids just bring a huge smile to your face? What a blast watching them learn and grow!

In 1993 I began my teaching career at New Norway School. Laura and I taught English in Korea in 1995-1996, I taught one year of school in Loughheed in the 1996-1997 school year, and have since then been teaching back at New Norway School. It is a great school with great students, and it is a great community like Mearns. Those are the reasons I was so happy to get back there. I teach Resource Room grades one to nine, and I love my job.

Life seems to be all about change though, and we are changing a little even as I write this history. We've lived in a 1917 character home in Camrose since 1997 but I have been feeling the pull of the country life and freedom for a few years now. We are in the process of purchasing about four acres a little ways out of New Norway, and hopefully, we'll be building a new house on the land before 2006 is through. I want my children to go to a rural school like I did, and I hope to finish my career out there as well.

Anyway, what I'm trying to say is that my life has been great to date. I've been truly blessed by God, and I'm looking forward to the future. All the best to all of you!

Kluthe, Brian & Louise

By Louise Kluthe

Brian moved from the St. Albert area to a farm in the Mearns area as a young boy with his family in 1961. As a boy he liked working on the farm, doing chores and working with farm machinery. The farm operation consisted of livestock (cattle and hogs) and grain farming.

Brian attended school in Mearns and then went on to attend high school in Edmonton. Later he attended NAIT and became a journeyman carpenter, working in the construction industry.

Brian met Louise Quaghebeur who grew up on a farm in the Legal/Morinville area. She attended school in Legal, Morinville, then graduated from St. Albert High School and continued on to NAIT, graduating from the Medical Laboratory Technology program.

Brian and Louise were married in 1976 and built their home on an acreage subdivided off of the Kluthe family's farm. Brian and Louise have four children, Dwayne (1981), James (1982), Mark (1984) and Diane (1987). All attended Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre and then went on to

graduate from Sturgeon Composite High School in Namao. As well, the boys have all graduated from various programs at NAIT, while Diane is presently attending NAIT.

Through the years, Brian and Louise have been busy with their active children: attending their hockey games, taekwondo tournaments and dance competitions, as well as various school functions and activities.

Over the years, Brian has taken over operation of the family farm, raising hogs and grain crops. More recently though, he has ceased to raise hogs but is still raising grain crops while also working in the construction industry as a carpenter.

Kluthe, Christopher & Francine

By Christopher Kluthe

I was born John Christopher Kluthe on September 19, 1956 at the Misericordia Hospital in Edmonton. My parents, John J. and Yvonne Kluthe were farming in the Mearns district with the home quarter being the SE 24-56-26 W4. I am the second of six children. My grandparents, Aloys and Frances Kluthe, lived in a house in the same yard. Initially, we lived in a smaller one bedroom house, where two more bedrooms and an inside bathroom were added around 1963. In 1967 we moved into the larger house when my grandfather went into the Youville Home in St. Albert.

I can still recall my grandmother chasing my brother Kevin and I out of her house with a broom in her hand. I could never figure out why she was like this until my mother later told me that Kevin and I were always wrestling and wearing our muddy shoes and boots in her nice clean house.

I attended school in Mearns for grades one to six and was taught by the Sisters of Notre Dame who ran the school. We were always in combined classrooms due to the small number of students. Many life long friends are people that I went to school with in Mearns. Grades seven to nine were taken at Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre. It was during these years that we became involved in the Riviere Qui Barre 4-H Club. In my first year I had the club champion steer. I enjoyed taking the calves to the competition and sale in the old barns on the Edmonton Exhibition Grounds. I also played on hockey and baseball teams. There was no high school at the time in Sturgeon County so we were bussed to St. Albert High School for grades ten to twelve. It was while I was in high school that I met my future bride, Francine Belley.

After high school I went to Grant MacEwan Community College in Edmonton and graduated



Christopher and Francine Kluthe family. From L to R: twins Michael and Kristine, Chris, Francine

with a diploma in Law Enforcement. My summers were usually spent working on the family farm. In 1974 I spent the summer working as a Park Patrolman for Alberta Parks. After Grant MacEwan I got a job in a plastics company in Edmonton, shipping, receiving and some fabrication work, all the while planning on making policing my career.

In 1977 I was hired by the Edmonton City Police and so began a long career in law enforcement. In 1978 I purchased a house in St. Albert and in 1979 I married my high school sweetheart, Francine. Francine had gone to Marvel College after high school and trained as a hair stylist. A career she continues in.

In 1982 we were blessed with the birth of twins, Michael and Kristine. We lived close to Francine's mother and father in St. Albert and when they were young, the kids loved to walk to 'Meme's' house for treats. Michael and Kristine went to French Immersion School in St. Albert until grade seven when we moved back to the Mearns district.

In 1992 we purchased 156 acres from my dad, the NE quarter of 24-56-26-W4. In 1994 we built our home on this land. I dabbled in some hobby farming but my policing work was too busy to allow me to do more.

I continued on with my education at nights while working. In 1997 I received a certificate in Public Administration from the University of Alberta. In 2005 I graduated from Athabasca University with a Bachelor of Professional Arts, Criminal Justice degree.

Michael followed in my footsteps and obtained a diploma in Law Enforcement from Grant MacEwan College. He went to work as a corrections officer at the Edmonton Remand Center. In 2005 he left for a year to travel and work in Australia.

Kristine obtained a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Alberta in Honors Physiology and is currently continuing her education by entering a Masters program in Laboratory Medicine and

Pathology at the University of Alberta. While she works hard in her studies, she also enjoys traveling.

In 2003 I spent nine months in Sierra Leone, West Africa, working as a police consultant for the United Nations. I helped to rebuild three war-damaged schools, largely with money donated by the people from the Mearns district.

Francine and I enjoy traveling and have visited many places in Canada, the United States, Europe, Australia, New Zealand and Africa. We continue to call the Means district home.

Kluthe, David

By David Kluthe

I am the eldest son of Lawrence and Simone Kluthe. I was born on January 12, 1962. I have lived in Mearns all of my life, and what a life. When I think of the kids today and the freedom that we had as children! We had the Egg Lake Coal Mine a half a mile from home that was our playground to race our bikes and skidoo in the wintertime. Our cousins lived close by so we always had someone to play with. I went to Mearns School (St. Charles) for grade one and then when they closed the school I went to Camilla School for grades two to nine. Then the first year that Sturgeon Composite High School opened, I went there for grades 10, 11 and 12. It was at high school that I met my first wife and the mother of my three children: Timothy, born on May 5, 1989 and then Alex Julia, born on April 13, 1991 and Mitch, born on June 24, 1992.

They live in St. Albert with their mother. After high school, I worked out for a year then started farming with my father. I bought August and Josephine Kluthe's house that they built on the site of the Egg Lake School and live there still. I met Lori Lane at the St. Albert Rodeo 14 years ago and she has been with me since. We got married on November 25, 2005. Lori has worked as a supervisor for the Alberta Pensions Administration Corporation for 25 years. I enjoy hunting and golfing, and we have joined the growing trend of RV'ers in the province. Tim graduated from high school in June of 2007 and Alex and Mitch are in Senior and Junior High in St. Albert.

Kluthe, George & Marge (Boddez)

By Marge Kluthe

I'm one of the lucky twelve that stayed in Mearns because I caught and married the boy next door in July 1961. There have been some storms along with the sunshine but we have 44 years behind us now. Thank you, God.



Wedding Photo of George & Marge (Boddez) Kluthe – July 19, 1961

George and I carried on Joe's farming business, working along with Uncle August, Lawrence and Willy Kluthe until Joe died in July 1963. We had a house built across from his mom and dad's driveway.

Our first son, Bradley, watches over us and takes care of us today. He was born a preemie in 1962. God bless him! We never brought him home.

Jocelyn came along two years later to cheer us up. So small and delightfully welcomed! What a tiny little sweetheart, as they all were! She became my helper and babysitter. I can still see her sitting in grade one class with her bangs cut as short as a horse's mane. But MOM!! I was trying to straighten them.

We raised four loving children, three girls: Jocelyn, Jody and Janice (Jan); and one boy, poor Darren!

Today, Jocelyn and her sisters are successful hairstylists. Jocelyn and Jody own their own shops, while Jan works out of her own home. They are doing very well. Jody works out of her salon in Australia.



George Kluthe Family. Back row: Darren, Jody, Jan. Front row: Jocelyn, George and Marge

They loved Christmas and birthdays. This was when we'd spoil them as they grew up. Between hockey games, tap dancing, figure skating, ball games, and the lake, we were always on the run, like most parents. Even then! We had some of our own habits too, like curling and fishing.

Darren is in the process of remodeling a building for wood fabrication with a retail business in mind. He is also working as a dispatcher for Precision with many a recommendation for overseas oil field work as a M.W.D. field supervisor.

We are very proud of our children, all of whom have married and honored us with five grandchildren. What more could we want, but more! We love them all!

Kluthe, Jody

I still remember riding the bus and seeing the little white church that stood out in the distance with the foreground corn color of almost harvested wheat fields. The sight of that has always made me proud of growing up in a rural area.

It was like a magnet for our little community. Every Sunday it seemed to draw a congregation that filled the entire church. I remember being outside the church after Mass, looking up at that steeple and thinking it would be the highest thing my eyes would ever see. All of the kids would run inside and between all of the adults who seemed to take forever to complain about whatever weather we were experiencing for the crops.

For a small community it was always strong. The people in it have always been there for each other. In times of celebration there was 'the hall'. It also was a place for gathering in times of happiness and sorrow. In my memories I recall the fishpond. This event would always take place in the basement



George & Marge Kluthe Family Photo: Group 1: Darren Kluthe, Kimberly (Harkness) Kluthe, & Kayla Gannon-Kluthe. Group 2: Ken, Jovan, Jocelyn (Kluthe), and Cole Young. Group 3: Marge (Boddez) Kluthe and George Kluthe. Group 4: Janice (Kluthe) Cornelis, Brian, Kellan and Hailey Cornelis. Group 5: Jody (Kluthe) Ryan & Darren Ryan (our Aussies)

of the premises. An adult would set up the magical pond (cardboard box) where we would cast our fierce fishing rods (stick with a string on it) and with that tug we would always reel up a small present attached to the hook.

I also remember the grand stairs of the hall. They also acted as a playground for the young. With the long railing that ran down the centre of the staircase we used to slide down on our tummies, hanging on for dear life. The race to the bottom was always full of excitement.

There was also the cemetery, a place not so far from the church that carried all of the people that made up some of the memories of the community. When I visited, as a child, we used to gather up bouquets of wild flowers and place them on the tombstones of my deceased grandparents and brother, who I had never met. I remember sitting on the fresh cut grass and offering my special prayers and conversation to them. On leaving, the ritual of the sign of the cross was always something I did as my closure to my visit.

I feel proud and lucky to have grown up in a community like Mearns. It has given me roots for my life and even when roots stray, they are always firmly in the ground.

Kluthe, Janet

By Janet Kluthe

I am the first child of John Joseph and Yvonne Kluthe (Sabourin) and was born on March 21, 1955 in the Misericordia Hospital in Edmonton, which was previously located in the Oliver area where I currently live.

Living on the farm afforded a genuine farm family life living with my paternal grandparents in the same yard. I was old enough to remember the workhorses, even though they were no longer used as such. I was also old enough to remember having an outhouse behind our first house, no running water and no phone.

Being the eldest girl in the family, with brothers Chris and Kevin very close in age, I had very little outside work other than picking wild oats and stones from the field, collecting the eggs, mowing the lawn, gardening and picking raspberries. I was involved with

babysitting, making meals and cleaning.

Farm life included distances to walk in nature, biking, reading, and sitting in what was my favorite tree, a large maple located next to our house. Sundays included Mass and visiting relatives and family friends. We had a purebred German Shepherd dog named Lassie that I loved. Farm life offered a lot of time for my reading and time with family.



Janet Kluthe with her two sons in photo taken in 2000. From L to R: Darcy Coghill, Janet, James Coghill

We visited the city for shopping and I fondly remember trips to the downtown Woodwards, the elevator that was staff operated and lunching at one of the nearby hotels. I loved trips to the city and all of the new exciting things to do and see. I also loved going to school and learning. In 1967, at the end of grade six, I returned from school to find that my family had moved to the big house in our yard that was formerly occupied by my paternal grandparents. It offered much more room for our growing family that eventually numbered six children: Janet, Chris, Kevin, Judy, Ryan and Bob.

I attended St. Charles School in Mearns, Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre, St. Albert High School, Alberta Correspondence School, and Medicine Hat College. I graduated with distinction with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing from the University of Alberta in 1985 and completed a Master of Public Health, specialization in health policy and management degree from the University of Alberta in 2001. I completed a two-year SEARCH program through the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research that focused on evidence to support decision-making. My areas of interest include social policy and humanity.



Janet Kluthe's family in October 2000. L to R: Anna (James' wife), Janet, Shawna, Darcy and James (holding Matthew)

Following twenty years in the health system, in January 2006 I accepted a Director of Initiatives position with the Canadian Council for Donation and Transplantation in Edmonton. It is a national position that includes travel across Canada. I am currently a candidate for Certified Health Executive with the Canadian College of Health Service Executives and an executive member of the Northern Alberta Chapter.

My eldest son, James Barret Coghill, was born in Edmonton on March 20, 1971. On November 14, 1974, my second son Darcy Hamilton Coghill was born in Calgary.

James married Anna Nimmon in July 2000. They live in Edmonton and have a beautiful son, Matthew. James is a teacher with a major in social studies and minors in general sciences and physical education. He currently teaches at Wood Haven School in Spruce Grove. Anna is a chartered accountant and is a partner at Price Waterhouse Coopers.

Darcy married Shawna Donlevy in October 2005. He is a firefighter with the City of Calgary and Shawna is a dentist with her dental practice at Scenic Acres Dental Centre in Calgary.

Kluthe, John J. & Yvonne (Sabourin)

By Yvonne Kluthe

John J. and Yvonne Sabourin were married on June 8, 1954 in Mearns. John farmed with his father Aloysius (Aloys/Alvin) Kluthe. When his father passed away in 1969 John continued farming.



Kluthe family photo taken November 1988. Back row L to R: Kevin, Judy, Janet, Chris. Front row L to R: Bob, Yvonne, John, Ryan

John and Yvonne had six children:

- Janet was born in March 1955. Janet married William Coghill and they had two sons. Janet lives in Edmonton.
- Christopher was born in September 1956. Chris married Francine Belley. They had twins and currently live in the area.
- Kevin was born in November 1957. Kevin married Connie Pighin. They had three sons and are currently farming.
- Judy was born in August 1962. Judy married Randy Craig and they had three children. Judy and Randy moved to the area in 2005.
- Jyan was born in January 1965. Ryan married Michelle Plaquin. They had three daughters and live in Morinville.
- Robert (Bob) was born in August 1969. Bob married Laura Kincaid. They had two children and are building a home on an acreage near New Norway.



John J. Kluthe. Photo taken in 1965

Most of our children were involved in 4-H and we were involved in the community. John served on the local Agricultural Service Board, was involved with the boys with their hockey, and was one of the founders of the



John J. and Yvonne Kluthe. Photo taken in 1978

Knights of Columbus in Morinville in 1960. He was Grand Knight for two terms, 1964-65 and 1965-66. He believed in the benefits of the family farm and enjoyed curling and hunting wild game. He enjoyed playing with his grandchildren and giving them chocolate bar treats.

We travelled to Australia, New Zealand, Tahiti, Fiji, Hawaii, across Canada and the United States. We went to South Korea to visit Bob and Laura in 1996. John also travelled to Germany to visit relatives and his father's birthplace in Brenken.

Sundays involved going to Mass, visiting friends and relatives, plus long drives in the country to look at the crops. The family received a Farm Family of the Year award for the M.D. of Sturgeon No. 90 in 1993. John died of cancer in 1998 and I continue living on the farm.

Kluthe, Joseph & Dorothy (Borle)

By Dorothy Kluthe

Joseph Kluthe, the eldest child of John Kluthe and Clara Mary Goodman, was born February 25, 1918 in the St. Albert District. He started school at Boulais School

(which was moved a few years later two miles north to the hamlet of Volmer) located along highway 27 two miles west of highway 2, where he completed his education.

Dorothy S. Borle, the eldest child of Cyril Borle and Gerarda Boddez, was born January 29, 1924 in the Ray District in the old Ray Hotel. She started and completed her education in the Glengarry School which was located a block east of the hotel and which was the same school her dad attended in 1904.

Joe and Dorothy were married in St. Peter's Church in Villeneuve on July 16, 1945. They started their life together at a rented farm near the site of the present Sturgeon Heights School (1945-1949). Norman (1946) and Larry (1948) were born while living in their first home.

They moved to their St. Albert farm, River Lots 60 and 61 (located near the Sturgeon Golf Course) in the spring of 1949 where they lived until July 1962. They added seven children to their family: Brian (1950), Rita (1952), Harold (1953), Barbara (1955), David (1957), Deborah (1959) and Gordon (1961).

In 1962 they purchased their present farm from Walter and Mary Ellett SE 2-16-56-26-W4. They completed their family with the additions of Carol (1963) and Donald (1965). They ran a mixed farm until Joseph died on March 5, 1999.

Prior to moving to Mearns, their children attended school in St. Albert. After the move the children bussed to Mearns and Riviere Qui Barre, finishing up their high school in St. Albert, St. Joseph's (Edmonton) and Sturgeon Composite High School.



Joe and Dorothy Kluthe Family. Back row L to R: Deborah, Donald, Harold, David, Rita, Brian, Gordon. Front row: Norman, Barbara, Dorothy, Joseph, Carol and Larry.

Joe was an avid curler and their children were active in curling, 4-H, hockey and youth groups.

Dorothy continues to live in her home on the farm and hopes to continue to live there for a few more years.

Norman married Carrol Wambeke of High River, Alberta in 1969. They have three children: Jennifer (Scott Candler), Jacqueline (deceased 1977) and Peter. Norm and Carrol currently make their home in Edmonton.

Larry married Joanne Majeau of Villeneuve in 1969. They have three children: Jason (Lynne Falls), John and Cory. They currently live on the site of the old Ray School (Ray Settlement) near Villeneuve.

Brian married Louise Quaghebeur of Legal in 1976. They have four children: Dwayne, James, Mark and Diane. Brian farms his dad's place.

Rita married Mike Boyd of Spruceview, Alberta in 1973. They have six children: Erin, Shannon (George Hoadley), Kelly, Megan, Brittany and Caitlin. They live in St. Albert.

Harold married Rosemarie Rustemeier of Morinville in 1976. They have two children: Steven and Christal. They live on an acreage near Morinville.

Barbara married Russell Lovell of Vermilion, Alberta in 1974. They have three children: Meridith, Rodrick and Cassandra (Charles Lovell). Their home is in Edmonton.

David married Lucianna (Ferrarri) Roy of Edmonton in 1986. Lucy had three children: Melissa Roy (Les Torrens), Melissa and Les have two children Hannah and Aiden, Jason Roy (Robyn Casault) and Cory Roy (Brandy Caron). David and Lucy have two children: Jessica and Joseph. David and Lucy live in Morniville.

Debbie married Doug Remin of Wetaskiwin, Alberta in 1983. They have two children: Brianne and Josh. They make their home in St. Albert.

Gordon married Leslie Bird of Morinville in 1988. They have two children: Jerret and Craig. They live near the home farm on an acreage.

Carol married Dennis Verbeek of Morinville in 1984. They have three children: Savannah, Cody and Kassia. They live on an acreage near Morinville.

Donald has one daughter, Morgan. He built his home on an acreage on his dad's farm.

Kluthe, Joseph, Emma & Helena Family

By daughter, Lucy Perrott

Born March 1, 1901 in Brenken, Westphalin, Germany, Joseph immigrated to Canada via boat from Hamburg, Germany in 1923. In the spring of 1926, August, Alvin and Joe rented land in the Volmer area. They cleared ten acres of land and



Joseph and Emma Kluthe – January 5, 1935

seeded wheat. With the money they made, they bought their first car.

In 1927, while renting at Volmer, they bought a quarter of land near Mearns. The quarter wasn't broken so they spent the winter clearing the land and working summers on the rented land. Wheat sold for 25 cents a bushel in 1930, and during the depression, oats went as low as five and a half cents a bushel. That was loaded at the elevators.

In January of 1935, wedding bells rang. Joseph married Emma Thomas. They had three children: Lucy in 1935, George in 1937 and Johanna in 1939. Emma passed away suddenly in June of 1943. After two years, Joseph married Helena Wagner in 1945. They did not have any children.

Our family spent many Sunday afternoons fishing at Lac La Nonne. Dad also enjoyed playing cards, curling, hunting, watching sporting games, and parish events. Many evenings there would be a crib game played at the kitchen table while Mom served coffee and treats to the men and homemade root beer to any children who came along with them. Dad passed away very suddenly from a heart attack in 1963.

Helena was the first president of the CWL in St. Charles Parish and received her 50-year pin. She



Joseph & Helena Kluthe

was very active in the parish and community, spending a lot of time with people who were ill, babysitting or helping anyone who needed assistance.

After Joseph passed away in 1963, she stayed on the farm one more year and in 1964 moved to St. Albert. She cared for Olga Bokenfohr for two years. She then moved to Edmonton and worked as a nanny/housekeeper for Dr. Charles Allard's family for ten years. Mom retired and lived at St. Andrew's Centre where she was known as "Mother Teresa". She cared for many of the residents by cooking, shopping, running errands, etc. As her health failed, she moved to the Youville Nursing Home in St. Albert. She passed away very peacefully on May 1, 1999.

Lucy married Gordon Perrott in 1958. They had four children: Donna in 1959, Wendy in 1961, Brian in 1965 and Shelley in 1966.



Helena Kluthe "Our Golden Mom"

- Donna married Darrell Sheehan in 1981. They had six children: Trisha in 1983, Trevor in 1985, Brendan in 1987, Neil in 1989, Kyle in 1991 and Erin in 1993. Darrell passed away in November of 1995.
- Wendy married Keith Langrell in 1987. They had three children: Amie in 1984, Kailie in 1987 and Rowan in 1996. Aimie had one child, Isaac, born in 2002.
- Brian has been with his common-law wife, Silke Kozachuk, and her three children: Jason, Sean and Christie since 1996.
- Shelley married Kevin Paton in 1990. They had four children: Clay in 1993, Dayne in 1995, Anika in 1997 and Rachel in 1999.

George married Marjorie Boddez in 1961. They had four children: Jocelyn in 1964, Darren in 1966, Jody in 1968 and Janice in 1969.

- Jocelyn married Ken Young in 1998. They had one child, Cole, born in 1999.
- Darren married Kimberly Harkness in 2001. Darren had one child, Kayla, born in 1993.
- Jody married Darren Ryan in 1999.
- Janice married Brian Cornelius in 1995. They had two children: Kellan in 1996 and Hailey in 1997.

Johanna married Norman Brenneis in 1959. They had four children: Dale, Karen, Kelly and Shauna.



"Cousin Reunion". L to R: August Kluthe, John Meyer, Joe Kluthe, Henry Altmiks, Fred Altmiks, Alvin Kluthe and Alvin Altmiks

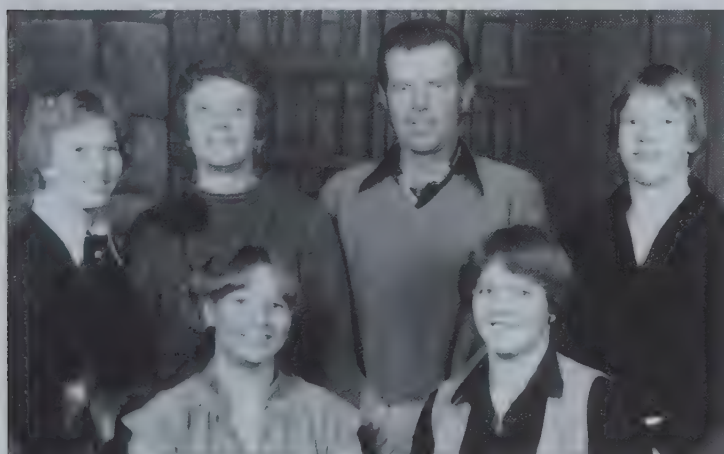


'The Four Kluthe Brothers', Alvin, Willie, August, Joe Kluthe.

- Dale married Lorada Cumming in 1987. They had three children: Tyler in 1989, Rheann in 1992 and Logan in 1996.
- Karen married Darryl Ashurst in 1997. They had one child, Carter, born in 1995.
- Kelly married Rick McKinnon in 1990. They had two children: Kelsi in 1991 and Elyse in 1997.
- Shauna married Dale Cherpin in 1998. They had three children: Rylee in 1999, Blake in 2001 and Drew in 2004.



Lucy Perrott, George Kluthe, Johanna Brenneis, and Mom, Helena Kluthe seated.



Gordon and Lucy (Kluthe) Perrott Family with children, Shelley, Donna, Wendy, and Brian

Kluthe, Lawrence & Simone

By Simone Kluthe

Lawrence is the oldest son of August and Josephine Kluthe. They lived in a small house that his father and mother settled into shortly after they were married. His mother had arranged partitions to make two small bedrooms upstairs. Lawrence

attended Egg Lake School located on the corner of the home quarter SE 35-56-26-W4 when he was five years old. At an early age he became the janitor and was responsible for making the fire as he lived closest to the school. In 1950 Egg Lake School closed and Lawrence attended grade eight to eleven at Mearns School. For grade twelve, Lawrence attended St. Anthony's College in Edmonton.

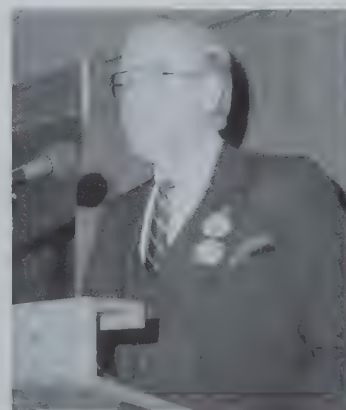
Lawrence farmed with his dad and worked at lumber camps during the winter. The first winter in Prince George B.C. with Robert Bokenfohr and Henry Kaup and three winters in Smith, AB. for Robacon Bros. in Athabasca with Ray Perras and Joe and Alf Hermanutz

Lawrence purchased a quarter of land with a house NW 25-26-56-W4 and a second quarter SW 36-26-56-W4 from Cyril Cloutier for \$25,000.00 in 1959. This was to be the future home of Lawrence and Simone Kluthe.

Simone Ouimet was the French beauty from Villeneuve who captured his eye. Simone's French Catholic parents, Simon and Julia Ouimet, were very worried about this German boy's interest in their daughter. Lawrence was invited to Simone's father's 50 birthday. While he was there, he played with Simone's little sister who was in bed with the mumps. After this date Simone did not hear from Lawrence for over a month until George Kluthe told her that he was sick in the hospital. Lawrence had picked up a case of the mumps that nearly killed him.

Lawrence and Simone married July 19, 1960. The house that Lawrence purchased was an old house that had been added onto over the years for the Cloutier's expanding family of 14 children. The house had eight bedrooms and many, many mice. Lawrence set up cold running water for his new bride and a five-gallon pail upstairs beside the chimney served as the bathroom.

Their son, David Michael, was born January 12, 1962, their daughter, Tracy Ann, on June 23, 1964 and a second son, Bradley Joseph on September 3, 1965. Their son Lyle Wayne was born on April 5, 1971.



Lawrence Kluthe – 1986

In 1969 they built the house they still live in today. They made the final payment on their land in January 1971 and after being debt-free for all of three months, in April 1971 Lawrence and his brother Willie purchased four quarters of land from Matt Tellier.

In 1965 Lawrence

was elected to the M.D. of Sturgeon and served as councillor and Reeve until 1981. In 1986 he won the Progressive Conservative nomination for Westlock Sturgeon, but was unsuccessful in the election, losing to Nick Taylor. Following the Provincial election, Lawrence was appointed to the Alberta Planning Board as vice chairman. The Board was responsible for hearing appeals from subdivisions appealing authorities in all of Alberta. In 1996 Lawrence was appointed to the Metis Settlements Appeal Board as vice chairman where he served for four years. In 2001 he returned to municipal politics as Mayor of Sturgeon County. Lawrence is also the public member on the Land Surveyors Association and a member of the Alberta Agriculture Appeal Board.

Lawrence and Simone milked cows, raised chickens and grain farmed in the early years. In 1982 they built the first of two large automated hog barns. Lawrence, Simone and their three sons, David (starting in 1982), Brad (in 1986) and Lyle (in 1997) now run Kluthe Farms – a mixed farming operation with hogs, cattle and grain.



Lawrence Kluthe Family – Lyle, Dave, Tracy, Simone, Lawrence, Brad

David Kluthe and his wife Lori Lane now live in the house that belonged to August and Josephine Kluthe. David's three children, a son Timothy Lawrence (May 5, 1989), a daughter Alex Julia (April 13, 1991) and a second son Mitch Ernest (June 24, 1992) all live in St. Albert with their mother.

Tracy married Craig Brown on October 19, 1991. They have three children, a son Evan Lyle (April 1, 1995), a daughter Jill Caroline (December 3, 1996) and a second daughter Amy Shanelle (June 25, 1999). Craig is the Area Forester for the Smoky River District and Tracy is the Director of Health Services for Valleyview and Fox Creek. They reside in Valleyview, Alberta.

Brad and his wife Bonnie (Brodyk) were married August 16, 1997 and live in a house on the East 80 acres of SE 35-56-26-W4 with their daughter Nicole Lindsay (December 9, 1994). Brad's son, Dillon Richard Kluthe (July 25, 1989) lives with his mother in Strathcona County.

Lyle and his wife Lisa (McKinstry) were married October 21, 1995 and live on an acreage on Lawrence and Simone's home quarter. Their three children are a daughter Reese MacKenzie (August 13, 1999), a second daughter Camryn Jaycee (November 21, 2000) and a son Dallas Jaxson (April 6, 2004). Dallas Kluthe is the 11th grandchild of Lawrence and Simone.

Last year, prior to the sale of August's original homestead, Lawrence Kluthe went to retrieve the set of 13-point moose antlers from display on the garage. In 1957 Lawrence and Joe Hermanutz shot a prize moose that made the local papers at the time. The antlers, with a 54" spread, are now displayed on his garage. Oh yes 'Hunting Season'! Lawrence and his boys all hunt, as their deep freezes will attest to. Why eat beef when we have all this moose meat to eat.

In 1980 Lawrence and Simone purchased a cabin with her sister and brother-in-law at Island



Alf Hermanutz and Lawrence Kluthe – "a good day fishing"



Lawrence and Simone's Grandchildren – Camryn Kluthe, Reese Kluthe, Amy Brown, Jill Brown, Nicole Kluthe, Evan Brown, Mitch Kluthe, Alex Kluthe, Dillon Kluthe, Tim Kluthe and baby Dallas Kluthe

Lake. In 1993 they built their own cabin across the bay. The cabin has been the base camp for the hunting season. Summers are great at the cabin with the grandkids swimming, tubing, knee boarding, fishing, or just sitting around the campfire at night. This summer all 11 grandkids – from four months to 15 years old – were at the lake on the same day. Lawrence and Simone are enjoying happy times at the lake and hope to have many more.

Kluthe, Ryan & Michelle

By Ryan Kluthe

I was the born the fifth child of John and Yvonne Kluthe in January 1965. I spent 24 years on the farm helping out before marrying Michelle Plaquin of Spruce Grove in October 1999 and moving to Morinville.

Growing up on the farm, we spent most of our time helping out with chores such as milking cows, picking rocks and mowing lawns. Weekends were spent going to church on Sunday morning, then either going for a drive with Dad or visiting with friends. Boy did we see a lot of the country!

Fridays and Saturdays in winter were spent on the snowmobile, either at the Egg Lake mine hills or back at the farm tubing with friends and with my younger brother Bob running behind, trying to get on.



Michelle and Ryan Kluthe with their three daughters

After attending high school in Namao I went to Olds College and obtained a diploma in Agronomy. The year after graduating from Olds, I went to Australia and worked on a farm through the International Agriculture Exchange Association, a very exciting adventure. I spent six months on the farm working and one month travelling the country.

When I returned, I went to work for Flynn Bros building grain bins and buildings. After a brief period, I started working for them on the farm equipment side where I obtained a Journeyman

certificate as a partsman. It was during this time that Michelle and I were blessed with our first child Katelyn, born in April 1993. In April of 1995 our second child, Amanda, was born.

In 1998 Flynns decided to shut down the farm equipment end of their business so I started working for Diamond International trucks as a service writer. In February of 1999 we were blessed yet again with a third daughter, Sara, shortly after losing Dad to cancer. I am still working for Diamond International, only now as assistant service manager. I still see many familiar faces from the area and enjoy talking with them.

Kluthe, Travis & Amber (Spargo)

By Amber Kluthe

As much as Travis and I enjoy traveling, it seems that our roots have been well embedded in the Mearns and Alcomdale soil.

Travis Leigh Kluthe (May 2, 1974), youngest son born to William and Johanna (Susie) Kluthe (nee Holzer), grew up on a farm near Mearns with an older brother, two sisters and surrounded by numerous cousins, family and friends (see Kluthe, William & Susie). He remembers growing up as the youngest of the bunch with the typical farm chores, spending time at his cousins and weekends at the lake. He attended Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre and then Sturgeon Composite High School in Namao and adamantly defends that in his school days he never found trouble – trouble just always seemed to find him! He remembers how important it was to be at home when there was farm work to be done, even when some of his friends were out having fun.

Not far from where Travis was learning how to walk, I was being brought home from the hospital (Amber Jolene Spargo, May 2, 1975), the first of three daughters born to Ivan and Judy Spargo (nee Pipke). I grew up not far from my future husband (on the ‘other’ side of the tracks, as he likes to say) just a mile west of Alcomdale (see Spargo, Ivan & Judy).



Travis, Amber and Ty Kluthe

There was exactly one year age difference between us and about six miles of gravel – little did we know.

I grew up with horses and have fond memories of riding with my sisters and cousin and dreaming of the elaborate ranch we would someday own. Like Travis, I was fortunate to grow up with many cousins and family nearby. I remember catching the Busby swim bus to the outdoor pool in Westlock every summer, sneaking next door to Grandma's after school for some hot cocoa, Sunday school at the Busby United Church and hanging out with my dad in his auto body shop. For many years I was also involved in the Double Diamond 4-H Horse Club and did everything from public speaking to hauling chickens for fundraising.

Although we grew up in the same area, if it wasn't for the long bus ride to the high school we both attended, Travis and I may not have ever met. We married on April 19, 1997 in Westlock.

After a few years living on the farm near Mearns, we gave up the rural life and built our first home in St. Albert in 2001. In 2002 we sold the house and bought an acreage from my grandparents, Thomas and Olga Spargo, a mile west of Alcomdale. It was an easy decision for both of us we just couldn't adjust to urban living.

In the summer of 2002, we had our first child, Ty William (August 18, 2002). Although we don't farm, it didn't take long for Ty to find his first love, tractors and equipment. He occasionally gets a ride in the semi-truck or tractor with one of his grandpas or when Daddy is helping out.

After considering a few different careers, Travis found a fit in environmental waste projects and sales. He is employed by Newalta Corporation and the region he works in reaches from central Alberta to the northern tip of NWT. I work part-time as a project coordinator for Alberta Agriculture, Food & Rural Development in Stony Plain.

The acreage living keeps us busy. There are always trees to cut down, grass to mow, leaves to rake and gardening to do. But even with the yard work and the long drive to work or town, there is an amount of security that comes with years of friendships and family nearby. Travis and I have similar memories of what it means to be a part of this community and hope that our children may get the opportunity to experience it for themselves.

Kluthe, William & Susie (Holzer)

By Susie Kluthe

William Joseph Kluthe was born on December 13, 1943, the third child of August and Josephine Kluthe.

He attended school in Mearns. St. Charles was his parish where he served as an altar boy and speaks about sneaking some of the church wine with the other altar boys. As a teenager, Willie decided that school was not the thing for him so he decided to leave school and help out on the family farm. Coming from a large family of seven children, his help was certainly appreciated. He worked different jobs in the winter, often helping out at Egg Lake Coal Mine which was a very active mine supplying coal to many a household until it was closed in 1999.



School photo of Willie Kluthe in grade four.

Growing up I, Susie, attended school in Legal, however, Busby was our parish and I often think back how special going to church was. All the women and girls wore hats and everyone had their special Sunday clothes. It was also a social time when everyone would meet and discuss the district happenings, farming and family. Farmers Day and church picnics were always a highlight and as children we each got \$1.00 to spend and that bought plenty of treats and entertainment for the whole day.

In the late 1940s and 1950s winters were harsh with lots of snow, which meant plenty of water in the spring. I remember water running over the road for a quarter of a mile. We would leave our car at the neighbors and use the team of horses and hayrack to get to the main road with gravel so we could attend church and buy groceries. We invented our own entertainment. Skiing was an old pair of wood skis and we would go along the snow banks on the roadside pulled by our old truck, an old car hood was our sleigh and many neighbourhood games of kick the can and baseball were played. Neighbors visited one another without a special invitation and cards were played for hours.

In 1962 Willie purchased his own land NW 36-56-26 W4 and SE 36-56-26 W4 from Ivan Gouin, next to Egg lake Coal Mine.

On December 28, 1964 Willie and I, Johanna Mary Holzer (better known as Susie) married in the Busby Church. It was a day to remember – minus 36 degrees Fahrenheit. I was the fourth child of Mike and Johanna (nee Byer) Holzer who were parishioners of St. Anthony's Church in Busby.

Willie and I farmed with his brothers Lawrence, John Norman and his dad, August, until 1980 when

these growing families each went their separate ways.

We had four children, Shelley, Todd, Sherry and Travis. As they grew they became a big help on the farm with chores, garden and of course, taking care of each other. They have many dreaded stories to tell about plucking chickens and going on the egg run but that was life back then. Mothers stayed at home and most everyone had a few cows, pigs and chickens. In the early years we would bring a load of wheat to Five Roses in Edmonton and come home with a truckload of flour, so yes, we did a lot of baking bread, cookies and cakes. The kids spent a lot of time with neighborhood children riding motorbikes in the mine hills, which were also great for tobogganing and sleighing in the winter. Sports were a big part of their growing years, especially playing baseball and hockey.



Wedding photo of Susie Holtzer and Willie Kluthe – Dec. 28, 1964

Years went by quickly. Shelley graduated in 1983, attended Red Deer College and then on to university and received her Bachelor of Education degree, majoring in Business Education. She married James Porter on June 1, 1996. They now have two daughters: Elizabeth and Amanda. (See Porter, James and Shelley.)

Todd William Kluthe was born on November 25, 1966. Todd took up farming with his dad and now resides on the farm homestead. He married Karen McLean on July 22, 1989. They later divorced in May 1998. Their two daughters Marie Johanna, born March 21, 1989 and Samantha Rose, born September 16, 1991, reside with Todd on the farm. The farm involves a cow/calf operation and mixed grain.

Sherry Johanna was born on May 16, 1969 and attended her first year of university in Lethbridge.



Kluthe Family Photo. Back row: Travis, Willie and Susie. Front row: Shelley, Sherry and Todd



Todd Kluthe Family – Marie, Todd and Samantha

She received her degree at the University of Alberta in Family and Child Welfare Services with whom she is presently employed within Edmonton. On November 4, 1997 she married Jason Bent. In September 1999 they experienced the birth and loss of their first son, Robert William. Their second son, Nathan Robert was born on December 1, 2000. They were divorced in 2002. Sherry and Nathan currently reside in St. Albert.

Travis Leigh was born on May 2, 1974. He is presently employed with Newalta in the environmental division. He married Amber Spargo on April 19, 1997 and they have a son, Ty William, born August 18, 2002. (See Kluthe, Travis and Amber.)

We presently reside on NE 18-56-25 W4 on the quarter section that we purchased in November 1994 from Neil and Maggie Flynn. In 1985 I went to work for Alberta Agriculture at the Morinville District Office until its closure in April 2002. In



Sherry and Nathan Bent

2001 Willie partnered with some friends and purchased some land in the Manning area where they are raising buffalo. Todd has taken over the cattle management portion of the farm and perhaps we could say we are semi-retired.

The 40 years we have been married have gone by quickly. Looking back, we have many fond memories of the community, friends and family. There were many good-time cabarets held in the Mearns Community Hall (former school), which brought the community together. Playing baseball with the 'Mearns Mashers' for years will leave laughter and memories forever. The sad times were saying goodbye to our parents, losing some of our dearest friends, Aimee Flynn and Merle Brenneis, too early in life and many others that have left a path in the community.

Our grandchildren are wonderful and all, except Nathan who lives in St. Albert, are fourth generation in this community, attending the same schools and churches as their parents.

Krywko, Edward & Paulette (Therberge)

By Edward Krywko

I was born Edward William to Barbara and William Krywko on December 9, 1938 in Drumheller, Alberta. I lived on a farm with my family near Munson, Alberta until 1944 when we moved to a farm my father purchased four miles west of Morinville, SE 2-56-26-W4.

When I first started school I walked one and a half miles to the Tellier School. Then, for a short time of a couple of months, I went to the convent in Morinville and then to another school south of home before going to St. Charles School in Mearns. I took my grades three to nine at Mearns. These were my very best years in school, for learning was easy and I had fabulous teachers in the Sisters – I was very glad to have had them as my teachers. I completed my high school at Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre.

After school I worked for my father on the farm. In 1959 I worked for a farmer in the Munson area near Drumheller for the summer months. Then on October 26, 1960 I married Paulette Therberge from Legal, Alberta.

The first summer after we were married, we bought a clock radio for \$36 that we paid for over six months!

We built a little house (16x26) on the same farmyard as my parents. This little home had no running water and no toilets so we had to haul all of our water in from the farm well. Our four children, Kendall, Ronald, Brian and Christine were born when we lived in the little house.

In 1961, we broke 200 acres of land on the Alexander Indian Reserve, which cost me \$16,000 to do. I got three free crops then farmed the land on the one-third-share basis.



Ed and Paulette Krywko on their 40th Wedding Anniversary. Seated: Brian, Paulette, Ed & Christine. Standing: Kendal & Ron

We used the farm grain truck for our transportation (I even courted Paulette with this truck) until 1962 when we purchased our first car, a 1949 Monarch for \$75, which was later traded off for a 1953 Meteor and \$300 extra.

The first tractor that I purchased was a John Deere R for \$2,500, which had 50 horsepower. I worked for the Department of Highways driving my

tractor, pulling two packers behind on Highway #2 for a wage of \$4.25 per hour to help pay for the tractor.

We purchased our first farm machinery, a combine, a swather and an auger, from Ed Borle when he retired from farming. He charged me \$7,500 which was paid for at \$1,000 per year for seven years with no interest. He was a great neighbor who helped me get my start in farming. Around this same time, I purchased a double disk drill from Krauskopf Brothers for \$500.

In 1963 we started a 60 sow hog farrowing operation and we sold the wiener pigs, weighing about 30 pounds, for \$8.00 to \$30.00 each.

Also, for extra income to help buy our groceries, I drove a school bus for Harold Granger for four years for \$100 per month.

In 1972 we purchased, from my parents, the E½ of 2-56-26-W4. Then the next year we traded houses; we moved into the larger house and my parents moved into the small house.

We quit the hog raising operation in 1989 and went into straight grain farming. Presently we farm 2,300 acres, half of which is rented land.

Paulette has always been there to help wherever she was needed, be it combining or to help a farrowing sow!

We have 19 grandchildren living within seven miles of us. We enjoy traveling and taking our motor home out whenever we can.

I had a very severe hip problem, which was miraculously healed on November 15, 1982. We have very much to be thankful for.

Krywko, Kendal & Jeannine (Wulff)

By Jeannine Krywko

I am Jeannine Marie Wulff and I was born on April 12, 1965. My parents are Ernest and Louise Wulff.

I attended Camilla School to grade nine, then went to Sturgeon Composite High School to grade 12 and graduated in 1983. I belonged to the 4-H clothing club in Riviere Qui Barre for six years.

I married Kendall Krist Krywko, the son of Edward & Paulette (Theberge) Krywko on August 11, 1984 at St. Jean Baptiste Parish in Morinville, Alberta. Fr. Croteau officiated.

We have six children:

Ashley Christine	April 10, 1986
Mathew Edward	May 13, 1988
Daniel Ernest	June 9, 1989
Melissa Marie	September, 28, 1992
Katelyn Louise	March 16, 1995
Bradley Kendall	January 25, 1999



Kendall and Jeannine (Wulff) Krywko married August 11, 1984



Kendall Krywko family. Photo taken Sept 2005. Back row: Kendall and Jeannine. Middle row L to R: Katelyn, Ashley. Front row L to R: Daniel, Melissa, Bradley, Mathew

We live five miles west of Morinville on Hwy 642, 55530-Range Road 262. We renovated a small house and lived there for four years.

Ken began farming with his parents, Edward and Paulette Krywko, in 1986. He also finished an apprenticeship degree in Sheet Metal at NAIT in 1987. In 1988, as our family grew, we moved into the larger of the two homes on the property. In 2005 we built our 'dream home'.

All the children attended Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre and Sturgeon Composite High School in Namao. We continue to farm and Ken works in Edmonton during the winter months doing sheet metal for homes. As a stay-at-home Mom, I do much volunteering at the school, church, and for the clubs the children belong to.

Krywko, Louis & Janice (Brenneis)

By Louis & Janice Krywko



Janice and Louis Krywko in photo taken November 1983

Louis was the eighth of nine children born to William and Barbara Krywko. After high school he began a career in sheet metal, following his older brother Alex. They worked for Delco Sheet Metal Company, which was owned by Connie Bourbonnais. Alex did not continue in the sheet metal trade for long, but Louis did. In four years, he had his Journeyman Certification and continued in sheet metal for 30 years.

Louis enjoyed building homes and became very good at it. He built three new homes for his family over the years and also a fourth home as an investment. His family thinks it is just a matter of time until he gets the building bug again.

Louis met Janice Brenneis during those high school fun years. He was part of a youth group led by Father Ted Rozmahel at Mearns. Janice's cousin Carol Brenneis was also part of this group and Carol invited Janice to a youth group baseball game. By Christmas, Louis had worked up the courage to ask Janice out on a date. Two years later, on December 5, 1970, they were married in the Morinville St. Jean Baptist Church.

Janice is the oldest of six children of Ambrose and Rose (Byer) Brenneis. The Brenneis family lived three and a half miles south of Morinville for 20 years. Then Ambrose and Rose moved the family



Louis and Janice Krywko family. Back row L to R: Geoffrey, Shawna, Cindy, Thomas, Bonnie; Front row Janice and Louis

to a farm one mile west and one south of Busby. Janice went into education at the University of Alberta for one year but then decided she would rather be married and soon after, a stay-at-home mom.

Louis (1949) and Janice (1951) had five children: Shawna (1972), Cindy (1973), Thomas (1975), Bonnie (1979) and Geoffrey (1982).

Over the years, they lived in Edmonton for two years, Morinville for four years, west of Morinville for 13 years, Airdrie for one year, Oregon for one year, north of Morinville for six years, and now have been in Riviere Qui Barre for 10 years.

After raising five children, Janice began a career as a Medical Assistant and has been there for 14 years. Louis has taken many courses and is now working as a Building Safety Codes Officer.

Shawna went to Grant MacEwan College taking Youth and Child Services. She married Dean Letwin and is presently living in Gibbons with her four beautiful girls, Brittany, Daphne, Chelsea and Kayleigh.

Cindy has a certificate as a Legal Secretary. She married Mark Egan and is living in Prince George with their three beautiful girls, Kyra, Danica and Makayla, and one handsome son, Liam.

Thomas graduated from the University of Alberta with a Chemical Engineering Degree. He married Kirsten Gregorwich and is living in Devon.

Bonnie is supported by the LoSeca Foundation in St. Albert where she lives. She is presently working for Sobeys Grocery Store in St. Albert.

Geoffrey graduated from N.A.I.T. with a degree in Building Construction Engineering Technology. He presently lives and works in Red Deer.



Louis and Janice Krywko with children and grandchildren. Back Row L to R: Geoffrey, Dean, Louis, Mark, Thomas. Middle row L to R: Bonnie, Shawna holding Kayleigh, Janice holding Chelsea, Cindy holding Danica, Kirsten. Front row L to R: Brittany, Daphne, Kyra, Liam, Makayla

Krywko, William & Barbara

By Janice Krywko

William was born December 17, 1899 in Sarny near Louov, Ukraine. William's father and grandfather both died from the cholera epidemic in Europe in 1915.

In 1917 William was drafted into the Austrian Army, serving as a foot soldier. During that time of service, William was wounded and saw many of his friends die around him. After a leave of absence, William was drafted into the Ukranian Army. He was once again wounded and sent home. After the war William farmed for eight years. He had a machine that turned his grains into cooking oil. This he sold to markets in the area. In March 1927, William immigrated to Canada.

Over the next 10 years William worked in Bruderheim for the railroad, harvesting at Munson and eventually started farming for himself.

Barbara Maik was born September 1, 1911 in Sarny, Ukraine. Her parents and family were farmers there. Her dad was killed in the 1st World War when she was three years old. Her mom died five years later from an illness. During the following



William and Barbara Krywko in 1938

years she joined a choir singing as a soprano and performing in many concerts. She also did some acting and had an acting roll in four movies. The house her family lived in had two rooms; one room was a dirt floor, the other wood.

Her first job was in a nearby city where she worked as a nanny for a rich family. She took care of their four-year old son and enjoyed this very much.

In November of 1937, William returned to Sarny, inviting Barbara to come to Canada as his wife. They were married February 1, 1938 in the Ukraine. It took seven days by ship sailing over the rough waters to come to Canada. They lived in Munson, farming rented land from 1938 to 1944.

The first four children were born there, Edward (1938), Alexander (1940), Marie (1942) and John (1943).

William came north and purchased a section of land four miles west of Morinville for \$11,000. A month later he brought his family, machinery and two Jersey cows to their new home.



Children of William and Barbara Krywko – From L to R: Edward, Alex, Marie, John, Jimmy, Margie, Kathy, Louis, Henry

Here, five more children were born, James (1945), Marjorie (1946), Katherine (1947), Louis (1949) and Henry (1951).

Their first home was a two-story house with one big bedroom upstairs. They had a coal stoker in the dirt basement for heat. Mixed farming kept everyone busy. A 1942 McCormick tractor was used to work the land. The two-cow herd increased to twelve (and later more) milk cows. The Jersey cows were Barbara's favorites. Soon there was more than enough cream to sell to help support the family. Chickens, pigs and guinea hens became part of the farmyard life. As well, Barbara planted a big garden and had some of the best flowerbeds in the country. In 1952, electricity came, in 1954 the telephone, and in 1963 a new house was built.

There was a lot of hard work to do; caring for animals, farming the land, picking rocks, building fences, chopping woods, carrying water, gardening and canning. Yet the nine children could always find time for making two teams for an exciting game of football, baseball or kick the can.

The family went to the Mearns church and most of the children attended school there as well. Later a school was built in Riviere Qui Barre and they were transferred to that school. With time, everyone either moved away to marry or to pursue a career.

Edward remained and took over the family farm. One of their sons, Alexander, passed away of cancer in April of 1972. William passed away at the age of 85, in February of 1985. After this, Barbara moved to St. Albert. On September 1, 2006, she celebrated her 95th birthday with the family. At last count, she had 29 grandchildren, (22 of which have married), and 54 great grandchildren.

This is a family that William and Barbara can be proud of.



William and Barbara Krywko family photo taken August 1984. From L to R: Ed Krywko, Marie Martineau, John Krywko, Jim Krywko, Margie Mills, Kathy Proehl, Louis Krywko, Henry Krywko. Sitting Barbara and Bill Krywko

Kyle, Frank & Ida

History from 'Decades of the Independence District' (1981)

In the year of 1905, Frank Kyle moved with his parents from the old country by steamboat to New York, from New York to Fort Edmonton by railway and from Fort Edmonton by a yoke of oxen and covered wagon to take up land in the Sion district. This trail was traveled many times for supplies every six months, summer and winter. At times the oxen floundered belly deep in mud or dust, beat powder dry to make breathing difficult. Black clouds of flying blood-sucking insects attacked you, draining out your life if they could.

Smudges were common in the summer to keep away the bugs and the insects from man and oxen.

Maybe an old bear would be on the trail, which would start a stampede for the bush. Then grab the axe, get the oxen untangled, cut down more trees to get back on the trail again.

While in Edmonton for supplies you could have a good meal for 75 cents – a big steak, potatoes, all the coffee you could drink and a quarter of a pie. In those days a nickel was worth a nickel and a penny a penny. For a few pennies you could buy a good chaw of ‘tabbakee’ or a sweet sugar candy.

Steers used for working land cost \$35 to \$40. If you got them well broken you would pay \$100 to \$125 a pair. A good matched team of horses cost from \$500 and up and a cow cost about \$35.

In 1909-10, Frank built a ferry at Rossington. In the spring he floated it down the Pembina River as far as Sunniebend, through ice jams and high water, to be used to service another trail – land for new settlers.

In 1912, Frank married Ida Geitz from Chicago, who with her family, were living in the Sion area. They were married at home by the Reverend Myer.

In 1912, Frank took up a homestead in the Sion area. A quarter section of land, 160 acres, cost \$10 as long as you could break 30 acres or more in 3 years. A government inspector would inspect it and if it met approval, the land was yours. Frank did this breaking by pulling the wooden beam plow with five horses – three in front and two following. He also plowed up some Indian spearheads, some buffalo skulls and horns and some wild bees. Man, did they ever get things going. If the horses took off in a straight line you would plow a furrow six feet wide. Did you ever get stung on the bum by a bee? Then you know what I mean. A well was dug by hand with a spade and they got water usually by digging a hole up to 75 feet deep.

About 1918, Frank bought land in the Independence area, SE 26-56-27-W4th and in 1921 Frank, Ida and two daughters, Hilda and Lily moved to their new home. There was work for all, tending and milking cows, and spinning wool. Butter was made on the farm and sometimes used for axle grease. Eggs and milk were fed to cows and pigs, as there was no market for this produce. There was always a big garden with lots of weeding to be done.

The only doctor was in Edmonton, which meant a week of travel, coming and going.

As time went on the family was increased by two boys, James and Donald who gradually took over the farming.

The Kyle family took part in all community efforts toward progress. The children attended Bamill School and the family attended church and Sunday school at Independence Church.

Hilda married Arnold Weidrick of the Picardville, Echo Hill district where they farm. They had 3 children: Keith, Marvin and Myrna.

Lily married Don Rye of the district. They farmed in the area before moving to Edmonton where Don worked for the Northern Alberta Dairy Pool. They had two sons, David and Kenneth.

James married Joyce Whitson and they farmed in the Independence district. They had four children: Rodney, Sheryll, Kathryn and Gregory.

James and Joyce still live in the Independence area, as well as their children Rod, Sheryll and Greg.

LaFlamme, Gladys

By Gladys LaFlamme (Cunningham)

My grandfather, Nathaniel Edward Logan, came from Scotland and settled on land in Manitoba where Winnipeg is built today. He was married and after having four children they sold and moved to Alberta by Red River cart. They settled at Egg Lake coal mine.

My mother, Maria Emma (Maude) Logan was born at Egg Lake Coal Mine in 1888. When Mom was married she lived only half a mile south of there. That’s where my brothers, sisters and I were born.

On looking back, I was the first one who graduated from Egg Lake School to become a teacher. I am now living at Chateau Mission Court in St. Albert and am enjoying it.



The Laflamme Family – 1998. Back row: Clement, Lawrence, Kenneth, Marcel. Middle row: Sharon and Gladys; Front: Ernest

Lalonde, Paul & Elsie

By daughter, Pauline Sutherland



The Lalonde Family: L to R: Pauline, Leo, Darlene, Don, Debbie, Ed and Marcel. Seated: Paul & Elsie Lalonde

We moved to Alcomdale in February 1944 from Legal. There were three kids then, Don, Leo and myself, Pauline. Then Marcel in 1945, Marlene in 1947, Eddie in 1948, Darlene in 1950, then years later Debbie in 1961.

Dad worked some years for the Spargo brothers. That was our main source of support, but we had cows, pigs, horses, chickens and geese. Dad would fatten a beef and a pork for our winter meat and we had a large garden and a big potato patch the folks planted.

Paul and Elsie purchased their house from Thomas Spargo in about 1946.

In 1948 Dad bought his first car, a Model A from our Uncle Alex Morrison. Until then we traveled by horses. When Dad bought the car he went out of the yard going somewhere and the RCMP stopped him and told him he needed a driver's license. He had to get it in Morinville. First time we heard of that.

In 1950 Dad started an auto wreckers and scrap iron business. He would wheel and deal with the farmers, scrap iron for good iron, and he bought cars from the Natives from Alexander Reserve.

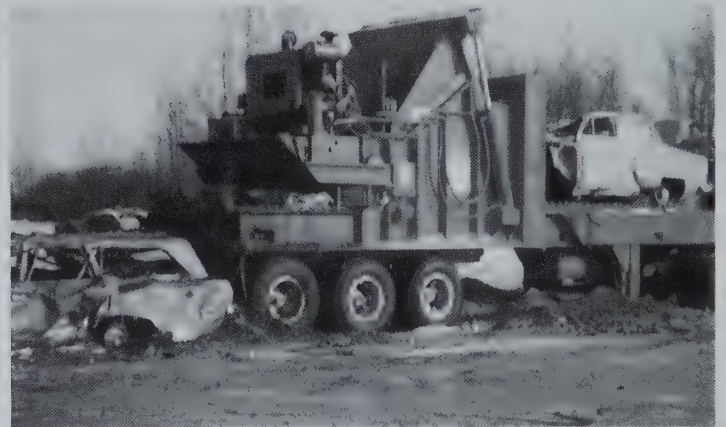
In 1953 my sister, Marlene, had just started school, and got very sick. She had diphtheria, a very



Leo Lalonde in his Air Cadet uniform.



Elsie Lalonde



Crushing automobiles at Lalonde's autowreckers – circa 1975



Crushed cars at Lalonde's autowreckers – circa 1975

bad sickness, and she passed away on October 18 at six years of age. She got it from the school well water.

I was the babysitter in Alcomdale and I used to babysit, cook, clean, etc... at home when the folks were out making hay for the cattle or when they were helping neighbours with threshing.

Slowly through the years we left home, one by one, got married and had children.

- Don married Nancy Lee and they had three kids: David, Louise and Dwayne. They now have four grandchildren.
- Leo married Wilma Zylstra and they had three

boys: Marshall, Jerry and Kevin. They had eight grandchildren.

- Marcel married Valarie Morin and they had three kids: Kathy, Allan and Barbara. They had six grandchildren.
- Eddie married Meladie Gough and they had two kids: Cory and Karina. Eddie was divorced, then married Roberta Whitzel. They had no children. Eddie had four grandchildren.
- Darlene married George Zwarich. They had two boys, Darrel and Calvin, and had two grandchildren.
- Debbie married Gert Vansevendt and they had two boys: Ryan and Dean. They had one grandchild.
- And I, Pauline, married William Cardinal. We had seven children: Linda, Diane, Cindy, Connie, William, Brenda and Bev. Then I was divorced and later married Ken Sutherland. We had one son, Vince. I had 33 grandchildren and 44 great-grandchildren.

There wasn't much to do in Alcomdale but I remember a movie at the hall and it was only five cents to get in. There were ball teams and I played ball a couple of years. Alan Mills and, I think, Ward Fulton were coaches. There were picnics in summer at little towns close by; Busby, Mearns, Morinville, Riviere Qui Barre and Villeneuve. There would be ball games, races and other games for everyone. There were corn roasts at Sandy Lake and they had ball games there too. It was a nice way to spend a Sunday afternoon.

One time the men were playing ball on the ball diamond and Dad's bull got out of the barn. When it saw all the people it ran straight for the players. Everyone was running for cars and the bleachers till Dad went and got the bull.

Dad used to buy cookies by the big barrel. He would take lunch bags and put them half full. At noon you would see lots of kids running to our place to buy cookies for 10 cents a bag. They called Dad the Cookie Man. Dad went to the auction sale and bought boxes of candy. He was then called the Candy Man.

One winter it had snowed a lot and Dad went to the old straw barn to bring the horses for water. He let them out and he got on the back of his horse, Dick. The horse got spooked and jumped sideways and Dad flew off into the snow. All you could see was snow flying up.

We learned a lot of good values and now we've passed them on to our kids.

The folks left the old farm in June of 1978 when they moved to Morinville where things were easier for them. In January 1996, Dad passed on and Mom died in May of the same year.



Paul Lalonde

Laurence Family History

By Ann Hogg (Laurence)

My grandfather, Louis Laurence, son of Bazile Laurence and Agathe, an Iroquois, was baptized at Fort Carlton in 1842 at the age of three. Little is known of his childhood and growing years, but in 1860, in Edmonton, he married Olive Bellerose, daughter of Olivier and Suzette Bellerose. They had been married only a short while when Louis took sick and passed away in late 1861 or early 1862 prior to the birth of his son Victor who was born in March 8, 1862. Olive was left a widow and likely lived with her parents until she married for the second time.

Joseph Benoit Sr. and Olive married in 1868 and she bore a son in 1869 that they named Joseph. They had settled on River Lot 34. However, tragedy struck again. Joseph Benoit Sr. was a victim of the smallpox epidemic, which swept through this part of the country in 1869/1870 and Olive was left a widow for a second time with two fatherless sons.

In 1880 she married William Cust, a "49er" who had emigrated from Ireland to the California Goldfields, then on the Caribou in its heyday, from whence he traveled north to Hudson Hope and Fort St. John area before coming to St. Albert. Having acquired some wealth during his mining and business endeavors, he purchased considerable tracts of land in the St. Albert Settlement. Olive was

said to be a great dancer, jigs being her specialty. When word of a dance or celebration was passed to her, she would immediately start on a new pair of moccasins. There would be holes in them when that festivity was over.

My father Victor Laurence spent many of his growing up years with his maternal grandparents, Olivier and Suzette Bellerose who lived next door on River Lot 35. In 1886 he married Catherine Bruneau, daughter of Wenceslas Bruneau and Julie L'Hirondelle. Victor and Catherine's wedding ceremony was performed in the St. Albert Roman Catholic Church and the reception and dance, held at the home of his mother (Mrs. Cust), were second to none. According to the account in the Edmonton Bulletin, it was considered "one of the grander festivities ever held in St. Albert". The account relates that at least 300 guests attended. I can recall my grandmother, Olive, having a fairly large two-story house on River Lot 32.

Victor Laurence, my father, farmed and worked for a time as foreman with his stepfather William Cust. In 1885 he was a volunteer with the rank of Private in the St. Albert Mounted Riflemen. However, fortune and good luck was not his to be had. He lost his job with this stepfather, mortgaged and lost River Lot 36, which had been given to him by his grandfather Olivier. He then became an itinerant farmer, moving with his family from one rented farm to another over the years, until his death at Mearns in 1917 at the age of 55 years.

Catherine, my mother, remained a widow until 1924 when she married Hippolyte Beaudry, who resided near the hamlet of Mearns.

Victor had been a part-time freighter during the winter months, working on the Athabasca Landing trail and on the frozen Athabasca River touching at points such as Lesser Slave Lake, Wabasca, Grouard, Fort McMurray and Waterways. I can recall when I was 14 years old; I accompanied my father from Athabasca Landing to our home at Fort Lake when he was returning from the winter's freighting in the north. After making a fire and having some nourishment, my father cut pine boughs and laid them on the ground. We spread our robes and blankets over these and slept there with the sky overhead for a roof and our feet toward the campfire. I was returning after having spent the winter with Pierre and Justine Bellerose at Athabasca Landing. I had helped to care for the children after school and on weekends, and assisted Justine during the period of her confinement for her son Patrick.

The family of Victor and Catherine Laurence consisted of: Elizabeth who died at 15 months;

William who was reported missing and later declared dead in Europe during World War I; Mary Ellen McLeod who lived at Nippawin, Saskatchewan; Joseph, a bachelor who died at Gunn in 1960; myself, Anne; Frances Douglas who lived at Guelph, Ontario until her death in August 1971; Elizabeth Laffete who lived at Oakville, Ontario until her death in 1962; and Alphonse.

Alphonse worked for farmers and at other jobs, and spent from 1939 to 1945 overseas with the armed services. He married three times and has three sons. He was employed with Alberta Forestry Service at Lesser Slave Lake at the time of his death in 1971. I worked in Edmonton for a time, and then followed my sister Frances to Toronto where I was employed in a factory as a sewing machine operator. I married and lived in Toronto until 1945 when I returned to Alberta. I lived with my mother in Edmonton until she passed away at the age of 95 in 1960.

I am the sole survivor of the Victor Laurence family at this time and reside at the Youville Home in St. Albert. I have some nieces and nephews who look in on me from time to time.

Those early years were very difficult and we suffered many hardships, but despite of those, we always relish the fond happy memories, which made our life worth living.

Lavallée, Clement & Denise

By son, Bernard Lavallée

Clement C. Lavallee and Denise Lavallee lived in Mearns from 1943 to 1948. Clement was the Grain Agent for the Alberta Pacific Grain. He also sold Victory Bonds for the war effort. Denise was Secretary Treasurer of the Morinville Mutual Telephone. Clement and Denise resided in Mearns across the road from the Alberta Pacific Grain elevator. The successor to Clement as Elevator Agent was Charles (Charlie) Pelletier.

In 1948 or early 1949, Clement and Denise purchased Guy's General Store located across from the Church in Morinville, Alberta. In 1955 they converted their General Store into an IGA Store. In 1957, they sold their IGA Store and purchased the Alberta Beach Hotel in Alberta Beach, Alberta.

During or about the years 1964 or 1965 they sold the Alberta Beach Hotel and purchased the Dallas Hotel in Barrhead, Alberta.

Clement C. Lavallee was born September 6, 1908 and died at the age of 95 in Edmonton, Alberta. Denise Lavallee (nee Tellier) was born on January 31, 1911 in Morinville, Alberta and continues to be an active senior and is presently 97 years of age.



Denise Lavallée with son, Bernard. Note the Alberta Pacific Grain elevator and office in the background



Denise Lavallée with children Bernard and Normand – circa 1943

Lavalle, Denise Conversation

By Denise Lavalley in a taped conversation in 2005

Maureen Slecza spent an enjoyable afternoon with Denise Lavalley talking about her time in

Mearns. This is an excerpt of the taped conversation between them in 2005.

Maureen: Tell me about Mearns.

Denise: Well I have good memories of Mearns. The people were very good to us.

Maureen: So you came to Mearns in 1943. You didn't come to Mearns when you were first married?

Denise: No, we went to a farm in Westlock for two years and then to Morinville for two years. That's when Clem became a grain buyer. He'd had experience with Mr. Israel Houle so got the job in Mearns with Alberta Pacific Grain. We got along really well with the inspector for the grain elevators. He would examine the books and sometimes sleep overnight and even have a meal at our house. The next day he would travel on to the elevator in the next town. I would keep special things for a meal when the grain inspector or supervisor would come. He was the top man and he would audit the books. I remember one time when we had a mix up with the books. When Oscar Paltry came to audit the books I had more money in there than I was supposed to. I was secretary treasurer of the Morinville Mutual Telephone exchange at the same time and I kept the money in a little tin box. The little box was then put in the safe in the elevator. But it had been mixed up with Clem's elevator money that he also kept in the elevator safe. Thank goodness we figured it out.

Maureen: Did you get paid to be secretary of the phone exchange?

Denise: Yes of course, I forget exactly how much but it would be a lot for us at that time, even if it wasn't much money. And it was something that I saved so my son could go to school in Morinville. Every cent counted.

Denise: I remember that Clem sold a lot of Victory bonds during the war. We did very well with that. He sold real estate too. My husband was an entrepreneur and he was a very honest man. I couldn't have put up with anybody who wasn't honest.

Maureen: Tell me about these victory bonds. Would they be like Canada Savings Bonds?

Denise: They were sold to help the war effort. Yes, he sold an awful lot of them and it gave us some extra money.

Maureen: Here's a photo of you and your sons with the elevator in the background.

Denise: Yes, that was taken when we moved to Mearns in 1943. Bernard is four years old and Normand is two.

Maureen: It's funny but we don't have very many pictures of the elevators. And now elevators are gone.

Denise: Would you like to take that picture for the book?

Maureen: I'd love to borrow it.

Denise: And here is another photo of Bernard reading a book. He liked books already then.

Maureen: Is that why you chose to put him in school in Morinville?

Denise: Education was important so we chose to send him to Morinville because then he would be going to a Catholic school. Also we wanted him to learn a second language. Otherwise the closest school was Alcomdale. He would have had to ride with somebody in a buggy. So we decided to send him to the Convent in Morinville for a year. It was room and board. He started when he wasn't quite seven years old. And I used to flag the train on Sunday, in Mearns to go to see him. I'd do his laundry. And the little nun from the Maritimes that looked after Bernard treated him very well. He liked it there too. He made lots of good friends there.

Maureen: How much did a grain agent earn in those days?

Denise: I believe it was around \$165 a month and we paid rent besides. We lived in a little bungalow across the road from the elevator. Oh, I loved it. It had beautiful surroundings. The yard was all landscaped with green grass with caragana bushes all around. I thought I was in heaven. The lady that was there before me, Mrs. Houle I believe, was a very good housekeeper. And we had a cow called Molly, but it got killed by the train. My boys never forgot that.

Maureen: Were the Ricards living next to you?

Denise: Yes they were. They were good people.

Maureen: Do you remember Therese St. Laurent from Morinville?

Denise: I was there when she married Emile Ricard. I kind of felt bad that she had to live with her in-laws. She was the prettiest thing. She worked so hard and I thought she was an angel.

Denise: One thing about Mearns I remember well is the famous dinner in the fall... the chicken supper. We never missed it even after we left Mearns. When we lived there I helped in the kitchen. I remember that Mrs. August Kluthe worked very hard at those suppers.

Maureen: You mentioned that your social life included playing bridge. I was surprised to hear that the folks played bridge in those days.

Denise: Yes. We had an old model T car. And we'd drive to each other's homes in the evening. We played with Mrs. Falls and Fr.

Merchant and the Harringtons, and Walter and May Ellett.

Maureen: Did you get your mail at the store in Mearns?

Denise: Yes. That little store in Mearns did pretty good. You should have seen it after church on Sunday. It was just full. People didn't get around as much as they do now but they all went to church. And they would all go to the store after Mass. And myself I had to buy bread. I never baked bread in my life and that was kind of rare. (To some people I wasn't a good woman because I didn't bake bread.) I guess I was spoiled because during the depression my mother kept up to three men from the bank for room and board for us to get along. And she always bought the bread. Yeah maybe we weren't 'good women' but we did other things. So I would go to the store and buy bread and sugar and flour and other things.

Maureen: What was your maiden name?

Denise: My father was Emery Tellier. He had a great friend in Antoine Lirondelle. My grandmother was Isabella Daly. She was Irish. She had a horse barn in Morinville so when the people came to town they would leave their horses there. She knew lots of the Irish people from Riviere Qui Barre.

Denise: Also when living in Mearns, Clem built a skating rink for the boys just east of our house. And there were ball games in the summertime. We went to Vimy and Westlock for games. We drove an old Model T Ford with no top on it. Clem paid \$25 for it. The boys just loved it but I didn't care to be seen in it when we went to town. My husband was the coach of the men's ball team in Mearns. There were some Lirondelles, some Cloutiers, some Douziechs, Logans and others.

Denise: I have good memories of Mearns. I really loved it there.

Leibel, Norbert & Elsie

By Elsie Leibel

In the summer of 1962 Norbert and I (Elsie) were living in Edmonton where Norbert was an underwriter for Co-Op Insurance.

School classes had started several weeks earlier when the Superintendent of Sturgeon County phoned Norbert and arranged an interview with him for a teaching position at St. Charles School. A teacher had been hurt in a car accident on the weekend. Norbert took the position of teaching grades three and four.

We moved into the Sheehan home that was available right in Mearns and near to the school.



Norbert and Elsie Leibel with their seven daughters. Back row L to R: Nancy, Elsie, Debbie, Amy, Donna. Middle row L to R: Janet, Norbert, Terry. Front: Patricia

Life was quite a change from living in Edmonton with all the city conveniences. There was a limited amount of water and living space for our three small children and us. Donna was three years, Debbie coming two years and Terry only three months old.

We carried drinking water from the Banacks and later set up a hose from their house to ours to fill containers for washing clothes in the summer months.

Very quickly we were included in activities in the surrounding Mearns community with neighbors such as the Sheehans right next to us, the Banacks were just down the road from us, and the Ricards and Pelletiers across the tracks. The Kluthes, Bugnets and Biddiscombes were also neighbours.

We curled at Alcomdale as well as bought groceries there or drove to Morinville for other activities.

St. Charles was our parish and the parish priest was Father Martin Volk. Eva Ell was his housekeeper. Both of them had grown up in the Denzil, Saskatchewan area where Norbert was born.

Living at the Convent and teaching at St. Charles School, where Donna later started grade one, were Sister Petra and Sister Adela who also had come from Denzil, Saskatchewan. It made us feel closer to being at home. The community of Mearns welcomed us and helped us in every way they could. Theresa Ricard took us under her wing. Many times she would come for coffee, only to bring baking and help me with some housework since my children were so very young. She was always, and still is, a great friend.

In the fall of 1963-64 Norbert taught at Alcomdale for two years. We bought the Kennedy home that year and did some repairs on it. We

bought a “stoker” furnace and had it installed in the basement and we bought our coal from the Egg Lake Coal Mine close to Mearns.

Norbert coached the girls’ fastball team and was also a member of the Morinville Lion’s Club while I was a member of the Mearns CWL (Catholic Women’s League).

In the spring of 1966 we decided to move back home to Denzil, Saskatchewan and take up farming.

We raised seven daughters: Donna, Debbie, Terry, Janet, Nancy, Amy and Trish. Our children were active in music, school sports, 4-H activities and exchange trips, camping, curling and skating, as we lived only one mile from town. We had horses for a few years and we enjoyed wagon trains, trail rides or just riding for enjoyment. I spent many hours sewing for my family, gardening and curling during the winter.

The girls are all married now and live in various areas with families of their own. We have 11 grandchildren so far and one great grandchild.

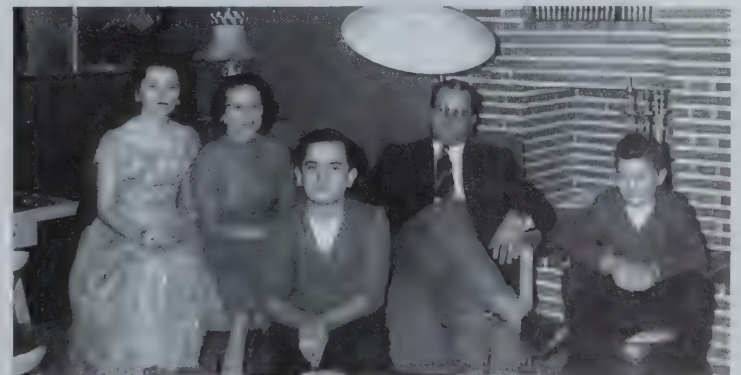
In 1981 we rented out our land and started a family catering service. It was a very successful business and very enjoyable; our girls were a great asset to our business. In 1995 we had an accident coming home from a catering function and we had to retire and recover from our injuries.

We do more traveling now and enjoy our retirement living on our small farm. Norbert is still active in Municipal Government and has been a Counsellor for 25 years while I enjoy gardening, my flowerbeds and, as a hobby, painting in watercolor and acrylic.

Letourneau, Lucien & Alma

(As told by nephew, Leonard Norbert)

Lucien Letourneau was one of the pioneering elevator agents in Mearns. He moved to Mearns with his wife, Alma (nee Turgeon, sister to Alice Norbert) and their two young children, Colette and Bob (Robert) in the early spring of 1943 where he



The Lou Letourneau Family – circa 1956. L to R: Colette, Alma, Connie, Lucien & Robert (Bob)

took up management of the U.G.G (United Grain Growers) elevator. On June 6th, 1943, their youngest son, Connie (Conrad), was born and a welcomed addition to the small Mearns' community. Lucien's career as an elevator agent was short-lived however as he developed a severe allergy to grain dust, and was forced to give up his newly found career in July that same year.

Always an entrepreneur, Lucien and his family moved to Morinville where he started building homes and went on to become a very successful home builder under his own company name "Letourneau Homes". Lucien and Alma retired in White Rock, British Columbia, leaving his youngest son, Connie, to continue operating the business. Lucien passed away at the age of 81 on August 24th, 1999. Following her husband's death, Alma moved to Edmonton to be closer to her daughter and continues to reside in Edmonton today.

Libke, Herman & Amelia Family

By Pearl Gilmore (Libke) with additional information taken from "Decades of the Independence District" published in 1981

Herman William Libke Sr. and Amelia (Lentz) Libke, along with their three children, John, Herman Jr., and Amelia, came to Alberta from Hamilton, Ontario in 1906. Herman Sr. was a member of the Hamilton City Police Force but at the urging of his wife, Amelia, made the move west to a farm one mile east of Riviere Qui Barre, formerly the Vanderneuton place. That winter the temperature dropped to 66 degrees below zero and the snow was well over the fence posts. Later the Libke family rented the Conover farm, three miles east and one mile south of the town. Herman Libke Sr. had taken a homestead in the present Stetten area. After a few years in the Riviere Qui Barre district, the family moved to this homestead where they kept a store and a Post Office, naming it Stetten. This was the name of Mr. Libke's former home in Germany. While here, the children attended Sion School. At one time, the Libke's had a farm at the Sion corner. This was purchased from James Sutton. In time, Herman Sr. traded this farm for a home in Edmonton and moved from the district.

Their two sons, Herman (Jr.) and John bought the store at Sion, once owned by a Mr. Goodluff. The supplies came as far as the town of Busby by train and were freighted to Sion by horses. In later years, they bought a Ford truck; narrow wheels in front, big ones behind, and they did their own hauling. In 1915 the Edmonton City Dairy set up a cream testing plant at the store. The farmers could

bring their cream there, get it tested and receive a cheque at once.

From 1916 to 1918, Herman Jr. ran the store at Belvedere. This store was destroyed by fire and Herman returned to Sion. The Post Office was located at Mr. Diggin's farm, half a mile north of Sion. Eddie Flynn was a mail carrier bringing mail through from Riviere Qui Barre. Another early mail carrier was Charlie Lett, carrying mail from Busby through Seymour, Sion, Dunstable and Belvedere. He lived a mile east of Sion.

My dad, Herman Jr., was born in Hamilton, Ontario in 1897. My mother, Sarah Stamper, was born in Cumberland, Northumberland, England, in 1903 to parents Moffat and Sarah Jane (Towers) Stamper. They immigrated to Canada in 1903 when my mother was eighteen months of age. Grandfather Stamper was trained for the ministry but with a wife and four children in tow they made the journey by ship to Halifax and then by train to Edmonton, Alberta seeking a homestead. They traveled northwest and settled in Dunstable, Alberta where my mother grew up. There was no school at that time, so they were home-schooled by my grandfather. Mom, being the youngest, was finally able to go to school at age 12. She loved riding horseback and won several races at the picnics in Highbridge and surrounding areas. My parents met and were married in the Anglican Church at Lac La Nonne, Alberta in 1919.

One Sunday evening in 1922, while my parents were away visiting my maternal grandmother in Dunstable, Alberta, the store burned down. John and Caroline (nee Kyle) moved to Edmonton where John became a salesman for Gainers Ltd. They were blessed with three children: Carrie, Dora and John. Amelia had married Leslie Murphy and they were living in Edmonton. They had two children, Frank and Betty.

A store was needed at Sion so Herman and Sarah started another one in their small house. Herman went into Edmonton to see a good friend, Mr. Moore, of Western Grocers where he was able to secure supplies and once more was in business. Shortly, a new store was built.

In 1925, Herman's health gave out so the store was sold to Mr. Kelly. Herman, Sarah and their two children, Sarah Amelia, born in 1921, and Herman John Howard, born in 1924 moved into Edmonton. Herman worked for the Wilson Bros. Grocery. After two years, they sold and Herman then worked for Woodward's mail order department and later for Graham Reid Furniture, as a salesman.

Charles William Libke was born in 1928 and John Moffat Libke was born in 1930 at which time

my dad decided it was time to get back into the store business. Consequently, in 1931, my parents, Herman Jr. and Sarah Libke, along with four young children, moved to the town of Alcomdale, a small hamlet on the Northern Alberta Rail Line from Edmonton north to Peace River. Herman bought an acre of land from Mr. Canuel in the northeast corner of NE 31-56-26-W4 and built a store with living quarters attached.



Libke Store in Alcomdale

The "Thirties" were not particularly good years to start up in business but my parents persevered, worked hard and had help from their young family, which was growing. I, Pearl, was born in 1933, Grace Kathleen in 1935 and Ivy May in 1937.

We had a wonderful childhood. Alcomdale was a good place to grow up in. We knew everyone and had the advantage of meeting people through the store. Dad's customers came from Sion, Independence, Mearns, north to the Busby corner and beyond, and south to Riviere Qui Barre, a radius of several miles. We sold groceries, hardware, dry goods, gas and oil, coal oil, etc.

I remember the big round of cheddar cheese from Ontario sitting on the counter, the long rolls of bologna, the raisins and dates in bins, along with rice and brown sugar. Butter came in wooden boxes. We had a whole stock of bananas hanging in the window. There was an ice cream cooler and half the time the ice cream was soft. Dad did all his own repairs and the cooler was on the blink more than a few times. He also repaired radios for people and cut hair.

The store was open from early morning until late at night until after the war. He also drove people to Edmonton to the hospital and for appointments. Those were busy times and when he sat down in the evening to read the paper or do his accounts we would often see him fall asleep at the task. Mom worked equally as hard, sewing our clothes in the evenings, washing and ironing by hand, gardening and tending our one or two cows, pigs and chickens.

There was always wood to haul in for the fires, as we had a cook stove, two heaters and a large pot

bellied stove in the store. We also burned coal and that had to be hauled up from the bin in the basement. During the winters my Dad was up several times stoking the fires. And speaking of fires, we had a few chimney fires whereby we all had to pitch in carrying buckets of water from the well to put out the fire. The well was just a few feet from the back door and with the water spilling along the path it was treacherous to say the least.



Pearl, Ivy & Grace Libke – circa 1939

Christmas was a wonderful time with people coming to the store for their Christmas order. We had a miniature white Christmas tree with actual lights in the window and when we were walking home at night from skating or picking up the mail at Lovelock's Post Office, it was magical walking toward that little Christmas tree.

I remember Adolph Plitt coming to the store with his cutter and horse, the horse all done up, tail braided, mane trimmed and standing up, sleigh bells jingling. He always had time to take Grace, Ivy and myself for a quick ride around the town. There was always a Christmas concert in the hall which we prepared for at school for a month in advance, practicing our parts in the school plays, singing and reciting. Then we got to help decorate the hall and on the big night Santa Claus came (I'm sure it was Alan Mills). Oh, the excitement and waiting until he finally arrived. There was always a gift for everyone

under the tree and a bag of Christmas candy and an orange.

Picnics in the summer were equally exciting and what a disappointment if it rained and the July 1st picnic had to be cancelled or postponed. We played ball all summer and there were always kids around to make up a team – Vivian and Doyle Collins, Gordon Duncan, Bob Hodgins, Pat Whitson, Rose and Delmar Spargo, the Moore girls and the Mills.

One of the highlights we especially enjoyed in the winter was walking about one-half mile east to meet the VanHove's caboose, with Ida and George on their way to school. We then were able to ride back with them, the horse making its way along, the stove pipe issuing smoke out of the roof of the caboose and George, with reins in hand, peering out the little window, eyes on the road.

I also remember walking with Grace, Ivy and Rose Spargo along the railroad tracks to Mearns on a Saturday and then riding back on the train to Alcomdale. The conductors were kind enough to let us ride the three miles free.

I had a paper route when I was about twelve years old and delivered the Edmonton Journal to seven or eight homes in the hamlet. The roll of papers came in on the train in the evening. I walked to the station, picked up the papers and then delivered them to the various customers, a walk of approximately a mile and a half. Any papers left over would be sold in the store.

We all attended school in Alcomdale which, at the time was called New England School and it was a one-room school with grades one to eight.

Sarah attended and completed her grade eight, but with no other school around to carry on with grade nine, she decided to work in the store. She married Eric Klapstein of Independence and they had three girls and a boy: Beverly, Kathleen, Peggy and Glen.

Herman (Hank) completed his schooling and then went to Edmonton for grades nine and ten and from there he went to Regina for his RCMP training. He married Ina Peck from Carmen, Manitoba. After leaving the force, they went to live in Edmonton. Hank worked for the Government. They had one son, Jeffery.



Sarah Libke

Charles (Charlie) attended Belle Valley School for grade eleven and rode horseback the four miles to and from school. He married June Rowe from England. They now live in Vancouver where Charlie is a salesman. They had three children: Ian, Kim and Lee.

Alcomdale finally offered grades nine, ten and eleven. John completed his grade ten, started his own trucking business and also joined with Charles in a B.A. Oil and Gas Bulk Sales service in Alcomdale. John married Nora Arlow of Independence. They are living in Edmonton and raised four children: Gregory, Rodney, Susan and Jamie. John manages his own Gulf Service Station.

I, Pearl, was able to take my grade eleven at home and then went to Edmonton for grade twelve and University.

Grace completed her grade eleven and went to McTavish Business College in Edmonton. She married Gilbert Roy of Riviere Qui Barre. They lived at High Level and owned and operated a motel and lounge. They had two children, Susanne and Mark.

Ivy completed her grade eleven and took grade twelve in Edmonton also. She married Victor Sernowski. They lived in Edmonton with their two children, Ivan and Garth. Victor worked for International Harvester.

We attended Independence United Church where Dad was an elder for a number of years. After some piano lessons and a few lessons on the organ from Mrs. Orpha Fulton, I was asked to play the organ for the Sunday church service. This was rather frightening as I had to play for people to sing, but the Fultons (Ward, Cameron and their father), with their booming good voices, carried me through and the mistakes I made were smoothed over.

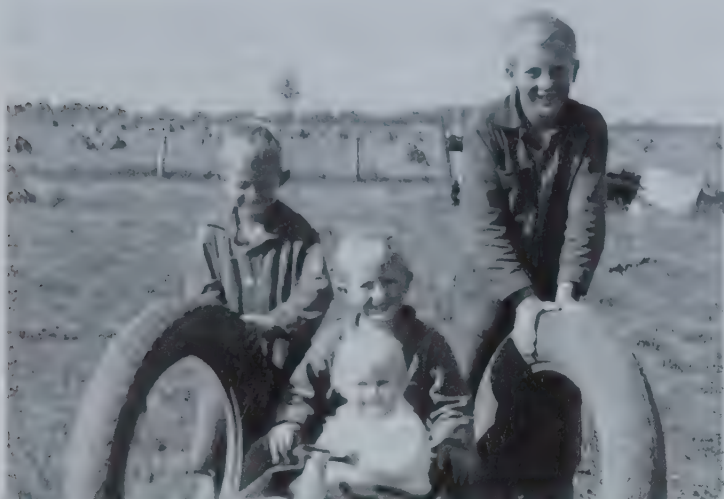
As we grew up, married and moved on to careers in Edmonton, our parents found it more difficult to manage the store on their own, and although they would have preferred to stay, they felt it was time to retire. In 1959, they sold the store to Mr. Dvernychuk and moved to Edmonton where they spent a few short years before Mom died in



John Libke – circa 1938

1963 at the age of 61. Dad passed away in 1985. They are buried in the Anglican cemetery in LacLaNonne.

The store has since been bulldozed to make way for a fine new highway north.



L to R: Charles, John, Herman Jr., and Pearl Libke – circa 1934/1935

I taught school in Edmonton for six years, married Duncan Gilmore, a land surveyor from Nova Scotia, and moved to Ottawa for a couple of years while he surveyed Indian Reserves in northern Manitoba. We then moved back to Edmonton and in 1962 we started our own land surveying practice and are still working in that business. We have four children, Duncan Jr., John, Alex and Marcie Jo, and ten grandchildren. Our oldest son works with us as an Alberta Land Surveyor. Our second son is a graphic artist with the Department of Agriculture and our third son manages his own line locating company. Our only daughter teaches school in Calgary.

Alcomdale is a part of their lives in the memories and stories we tell, and they in turn will tell their children and grandchildren.

Lirondelle, Doris

By Doris Lirondelle

My name is Doris Lea Lirondelle. That was my name and I'm back to that name. I was born December 20, 1939 at the Misericordia Hospital in Edmonton. I was premature weighing 4lbs and some ounces. It is amazing that I lived especially during the winter in houses where the water froze on the stove. I had a happy childhood. I started school at Egg Lake School, which was a one-room school from grades one to nine. I made my First Communion at the convent in Morinville then went to the convent in Legal with the Grey Nuns for grades three to five. Then it was Mearns for two years and back to Legal until Grade 10. I took



Doris Lirondelle's First Communion with grandmother Lea Halle



Ernie Wulff and Doris Lirondelle at her graduation, 1959

Grade 11 & 12 and graduated from Camilla High School in Riviere Qui Barre, then I went to the University of Alberta to study to be a teacher.

Being the only child, and living in an equal opportunity home, I got to do all the different types of farm work... feed pigs, milk cows, work in the field, clean barns and weed gardens, which I still dislike. I was an entrepreneur; when I was in high school I had a contract with MacDonald Consolidated to sell pussy willows in the spring, then I bought the grading station at the Edmonton City Market. I was too young to sign so Mom had to

sign for that. Mom would grade the eggs and I would grade the poultry on Saturday mornings for the farms to sell their poultry and eggs. Mom and I had to take a course offered by the federal government on how to grade eggs and poultry. My parents specialized in the breeding of fast growing broilers. They would get their chicks in February and their eggs would be ready for the hatchery by September. So there was two months of the new hens (pullets) starting to lay their eggs the required size for the hatchery. In the summer, five days a week, I had an egg route to sell eggs and chickens. It started from the Yellowhead to Stony Plain Road from 150th to 156th street, one street a day. I would then come home and get ready for the next day.

When I was younger I remember going to church at St. Charles at Mearns and also going to church at St. Alexander on the Alexander reserve. It was very special to go to church on the reserve because we had to bring a lunch. At that time you could not receive communion if you ate after midnight. So we went to church early, went to confession and received communion, then had a lunch before mass. I had no grandfathers so old Alexei Arcand sat at the back of the church and he always had a nice smile for me or patted me on the head sometimes. That is a fond memory of a grandpa for me.

I was a teacher at St. Edmund's School in North Vancouver for 42 years and taught approximately 1,050 students. Most of my time teaching was grade two and I prepared these students for the sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist. It gives me the shivers to think of the impact I might have made on people's spiritual choices. I still see a lot of my students, go out with them and see them in church. I am very blessed and gifted in many ways. Now that I am retired, I am still very busy at church, St. Paul's Indian Catholic; I am involved in the RCIA program, soup kitchen, prayer group, and the children's liturgy. Also I'm involved with Mission churches on the reserves, going to the meetings and discussing what we do in our parishes to share ideas and programs. Last year, 2006, was the first time in 117 years that there was representation of the Coast Salish People at Lac Ste. Anne. They had their Eucharistic Celebration at the Wednesday 10:00 a.m. mass. I was very excited about that.

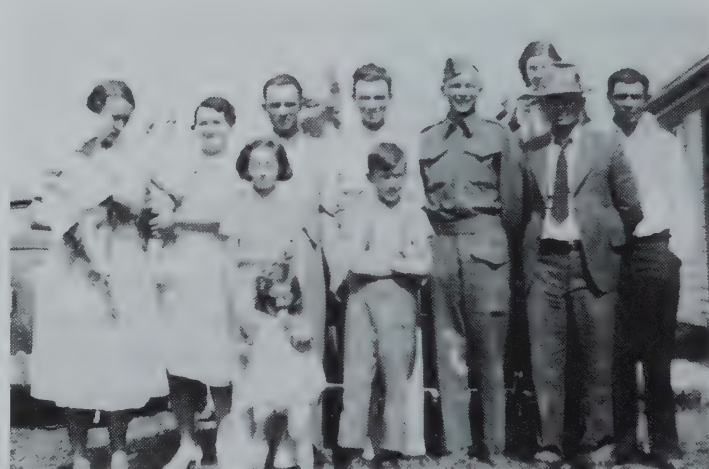
I married George Kaleks and we had two children; Valeria Lea, born June 13, 1968 and Robert John, born June 1, 1971. I taught both of my children at St. Edmund's and they graduated from St. Thomas Aquinas in North Vancouver.

Valeria Lea, from the time she could talk, said she was going to be a doctor, so when she started university at Simon Fraser University she went into

the sciences. That just lasted one semester – calculus did her in. The next semester, she enrolled in business courses that did not excite her much either. We were spending a lot of time in Alberta at Lac Ste. Anne and at Ernie and Louise Wulff's place. All their four children got married in August so we were home for these weddings. While we were there, Valeria and Lori would work in the hall in Morinville with Grandma Hebert to cater for the weddings that took place in the summer months. So, with all this, Valeria became a chef. She worked at the same place her Grandfather worked, at Capilano Golf and Country Club as well as other high-end places. She then decided to apply to be chef manager in small town Alberta – Brooks, Alberta to be exact, and to manage the three cafeterias at Lake Side Meat Processing Plant.

There she met her husband David Davenport and they were married Feb. 19, 2005. They left Lake Side and started their own janitorial business, "DVD Janitorial Service" in Brooks, Alberta. Their first born, Jean Baptiste, born Oct. 30, 2005, died Oct. 30, 2005. He lived for 30 minutes (premature birth) and on Oct. 21, 2006 their daughter, Angelique Josephine Lea Davenport, was born. When David questioned about his say in the names, Val said, "you have the last name, David."

Robert John took time out after he finished school then went to work for a fish plant, cleaning the deck after fishermen unloaded their boats. He was upgraded to being the iceman, filling boats with ice for their fish. He was going to college taking communication courses and business management courses. These companies sold out twice but each company hired Robert. This last company brought him into the office as a salesman and now he is a



Back row L to R: Albertine Saffin, Alice Hanley, Eli Lirondelle, Louise Lirondelle, Emile Lirondelle, Albert Lirondelle (in uniform), Denise Lirondelle, Mac Lirondelle. Front row L to R: Pearl Saffin, Mabel Saffin is child in front, George Saffin, Robert Lirondelle is the gentleman wearing the hat

sales representative, has many accounts and travels a lot for the company.

My son Robert and I live in North Vancouver in a town house. Most of my dad's family and all of my mom's family are buried in the Mearns Cemetery as well as my brother and grandson.

My Memories of my Grandmother and my Aunties and Uncles

Saying the rosary: In our families a lot of us said the rosary; it was on the radio at 7:00 p.m. In my youth we said the rosary at home. If we were at Uncle Mack and Aunty Denise Lirondelle's, it was different, especially when the cousins were there to say the rosary. Their five children, me, and three or four of the LeBlanc children, that was a whole different situation with nine or ten kids. I remember this one time we were all in our places saying the rosary and a mouse ran across the floor. Uncle Mack was terrified of mice; he jumped up onto a chair then jumped off right on the mouse and killed it. Well that finished our saying of the rosary that night. When I said the rosary at Uncle Albert and Aunty Blanche Wulff's, Uncle Albert and Ernie knelt on one side of the bed and Aunty Blanche and I knelt on the other side of the bed. This made for giggles, as sure enough something would just set us off – a fly, a mosquito, or whatever. When my grandmother Lea Halle died, all the family were there and Father Gregory was the parish priest at Mearns at that time. He said she had a very peaceful death. We all said the rosary with my grandma at 7:00 p.m. on the radio and she died after the rosary was completed.

Praying and going to church: when we went to church at Mearns we all had our pews where we sat and when mass was over the men went out first and the women prayed a little longer then came out. One Christmas I remember going to church in a sleigh and the beautiful harness with bells and it sounded magical when the horses were trotting. I would like to repeat that glorious feeling.



Robert Lirondelle and his sisters. L to R: Albertine Saffin, Laura Hughes, Alice Hanley

Other events:

Uncle Jim Halle: after church on Sunday we always went to my grandmother's place for dinner and Uncle Jim would tease Ernie and me until he had one of us crying. My grandmother would not be pleased with him. When we were older we made sure we teased him. Uncle Jim always made sure the reindeer had their oats when they made their rounds at Christmas and we saw Santa's tracks on the roof and knew that Santa ate the cookies. He would sit on the steps on hot summer Sunday afternoons and make ice cream.



1953 Photo – L to R front row: Doris Lirondelle, Ernie Wulff, Josephine (Hallé) Lirondelle. Back row: Blanche (Hallé) Wulff, Lea Hallé, Albert Wulff, Jim Hallé and Robert Lirondelle.

Uncle Albert and Aunty Blanche Wulff: Uncle Albert loved to play cards with his nieces and nephews – Fish and Old Maid were the favorites – and he always made you feel like you were the very special niece or nephew. Aunty Blanche made me feel so happy on one occasion for my birthday. My birthday was December 20th and everybody was plucking turkeys at that time of the year to go to market. You went to market during the day to sell turkeys, and plucked turkeys at night for the next day. This one year, they were plucking turkeys at the Wulff farm; I was in the house and Aunty Blanche came in and gave me my birthday present. It was a pretty gold bracelet, which I still have. Aunty Blanche's home was never without matrimonial cake.

Uncle Mack and Aunty Denise Lirondelle: Uncle Mack was the storyteller and told us kids some really scary stories at night; then we would go to bed and hear every noise in the house and be scared to sleep but we always wanted to hear more stories. As an adult I've read some of these ghost stories of the West and remember hearing them. Aunty Denise was an awesome cook. I loved her homemade buns and highbush cranberry jelly

(Stinky Toe Jam). Mom and Auntie Denise loved to smoke cigarettes and play cards.

Uncle Elie and Auntie Louise Lirondelle: Uncle Elie was a gentle person and he taught me how to jig; he would sit in his chair and dance, and we had to copy him. When Annette Lirondelle and I would skate to Uncle Elie's place on the creek, Auntie Louise always had some hot chocolate for us, and some treat to eat. It always amazed me the fancy meals we had without a store a few miles away.

When I started to write my family story for the Mearns Book, the late Maureen Slecza asked me to write something about our Métis history. I had to think long and hard about this because it could be treated in a negative way or positive, which could be misinterpreted either way. So I decided to do my own explanation. In Native culture we relate ourselves to animals like bears, wolves, eagles, ravens, killer whales, etc. I am considered to be a grizzly bear and if you know me you would agree. Well as a Métis (mixed blood), I decided to say that I came from the "Magpie Clan". The reason being that I believe this best explains Métis people because of their black and white feathers. Magpies are beautiful birds. They can be a pest and are usually found on the prairies. The feathers are exquisite; some are all black or white, some white with black or the opposite. Just like us Métis people; some feel totally like aboriginals or others like white people. Then still, there are others who feel aboriginal sometimes and white sometimes. That is about as positive or negative as I can be and I feel that is about how us Métis are. My mother, Josephine Halle, came from a heritage of the first Frenchmen to come to this country. The British brought women from England to marry these men, "Les filles du Roi", the Royal Brides. This was one of my great-great grandmothers. I saw one of our family's houses in Quebec that was over 400 years old.

I, Doris Lea Lirondelle am proud to be a Métis and I feel truly Canadian.

"Hy Hy All My Relations"

Lirondelle (L'Hirondelle) Family History

By Annette Kennett

"Some are gone...but not forgotten"

We'll start with our great, great grandfather Jacques L'Hirondelle (b.1759-d.1854) married Marie Josette Pilon (b.1782-d.1860). They had nine children:

Catherine 1804,
Jacques 1806,
Joseph 1815-1904,
Jean Baptist 1817-1876,

Pierre Alexis 1820,
Marie Angelique 1823,
Pierre (Catara) 1825,
Rosalie 1828-1820,
and one child died at birth.

Then, great grandfather Jean Baptist L'Hirondelle b. Lac Ste. Anne 1817-1876, married Cathrine Loyer b. 1829-1895, daughter of Louis Loyer b. 1801, and Jennie Jasper b. 1811. They had 11 children and were living in Lesser Slave Lake.

Julie b. 1843-1935, was married twice U. Bruno, Edmond Brosseau.

Emmalie b. 1848-1927, married Octave Majeau. They had 11 children.

Magloire b.1850 – 1907, married Euphrasine Beauregard. They had six children and lived in Edmonton.

Lucy b. 1852-1931, married Octave Belrose. They had seven children.

Jean Baptist b. 1856-1915, married Elise Beaudry. They had 13 children and lived at Lac Ste. Anne.

Janvier b. 1859-1903, married Virginia Robinson, had eight children and lived at Lac Ste. Anne.

Xavier b. 1861-1932, married Philomene Munro, had nine children, two died very young. They lived at Lac Ste. Anne.

Norbert b.1866-1959, married Madeleine Calihoo, had 10 children.

Antoine, b. December 11, 1868, d. September 2, 1939, married Lucy Beaudry, b. April 16, 1875 d. October 21, 1926. They married in 1892; second wife was Julianne Lawrence. Antoine had 22 children.

Marie, 1870-1920, married Wilfred Bouchard. They had nine children and lived near Vimy.

August, b. 1874 - d. 1874

Many of our forefathers worked for The Hudson Bay Co. freighting goods up and down the rivers and roads of western Canada. The job was very strenuous with long hours.

Freighting was an all-weather, year round job. Snow, sleet or rain, the freight went through.

When working on the river, there were three different pay scales. The bowsman, at the head of the boat watching for rocks and debris in the water, was on the lower end of the pay scale. The middleman, who helped with every aspect of operating the boat, loading, unloading and rowing, was in the middle pay bracket. The steersman, who rode in the back of the boat and oversaw everything, of course received top pay.

Antoine L'Hirondelle was the ninth child of Jean Baptist and Catherine. Antoine married Lucy Beaudry in 1892. His second wife was Julianne Lawrence. Antoine and his family lived at Lac Ste.

Anne then moved to Stony Plain, Villeneuve area, to St. Albert Settlement (River Lot G), and then to Mearns area in the early 1900's to continue farming. He also changed his name to Lirondelle, dropping the H around that time. Here are their 22 children:



Mr. and Mrs. Antoine Lirondelle in photo taken in 1894

Baby Boy b. Jan. 28, 1893 d. Feb. 6, 1893.

Lucy b. April 29, 1894 d. July 17, 1899.

Alphonse b. May 11, 1895 d. Sept. 10, 1895.

Zephyr b. June 26, 1896 d. July 22, 1928; married Delima Ladouceur b. 1907-1978, one child, Therese b. December 2, 1927 married Mervin Airhart, and had five children: Mervin, Joan, Hugh, Kenneth, David.

Jacques b. July 11, 1897 d. Sept. 28, 1897.

Louise b. July 21, 1898 d. October 5, 1991.

Albertine b. August 8, 1899 d. December 22, 1997 married Mark Saffin and had five children; Mabel b. January 30, 1927 married John Good, Pearl b. September 27, 1928 married William (Bill) Wilding, George b. spring of 1930 married Vickie Wozney, Myrtle b. May 12, 1940 married Joseph Kreway, Gordon b. December 13, 1941, died the same day.

Margurite b.? 1900, d. summer 1905 (lightning).

Joseph Bertin b. February 19, 1901 d. May 2, 1983 married Delima Ladouceur b. August 2, 1907 m. Nov. 21, 1928 d. November 13, 1978. John b. 1929, Harold b. 1931 d. 1932, Bernadette & Lorette b. March 25, 1933, Max b. July 9, 1936, James b. March 20, 1937, Arthur b. Nov. 10, 1938, Patsy b. March 6, 1941, Joe b. March 6, 1943, Lorraine b. June 27, 1945 d. May 7, 1993, Delores b. August 9, 1946, Celeste b. Sept. 7,

1948, Maxine b. January 25, 1950 d. August 4, 1953, George b. Dec. 24, 1953.

Wilfred Patrick b. May 24, 1902 d. August 8, 1902.

William Janvier b. Nov. 25, 1903 d. October 23, 1904.

Laura b. January 2, 1905 d. October 29, 1995 married Alfred Emery December 14, 1930. Had a (stillborn) baby boy September 27, 1937; married for second time to Donat Hughes in 1956.

Patrick (Paddy) b. April 10, 1907 d. April 18, 1910.

Mack (Magloire) b. May 4, 1908 d. June 17, 1987 married Denise Rottot November 1937, d. May 14, 1996, they had five children.

1. Shirley Janet b. May 15, 1938 married William (Bill) Reinke in 1956, they have four children, Allan George Reinke b. July 26, 1957 and he has three children, Christopher Leon b. March 15, 1976, Amanda Lynn b. April 24 1979 married Garth Lawrence and they have three children, Samantha Bree b. September 3, 1996, Coral Alexis b. March 27, 2001, Kirsten b. April 25, 2004, and Andrea Michelle b. March 23, 1982, Janet Denise b. October 2, 1959, married Jeremy John Barnaschone and they have three children, Justin Ryan b. December 31, 1982, Jennifer Audrey b. February 1, 1990, Jacqueline Shirley b. October 10, 1991. William Anthony b. September 24, 1960, married Mary Anne Friesen. Donna Elaine b. January 11, 1964 has a daughter Renee Elaine b. November 24, 1984.

2. Lee Denis b. June 14, 1939 married Mary Grace Hayduk b. December 25, 1938 d. July 14, 1994; she had four children, Steven Hayduk b. September 18, 1958 married Elisabeth and they have two children, Matthew b. October 30, 1987 and Timothy b. July 30, 1992. Donald Hayduk b. September 14, 1959 d. October 30, 1978. Lindsay Anslow b. June 10 1961, Greg Hayduk b. May 26 1962 married Larisa and has a daughter Acia.

3. Annette Ida Kennett b. December 10, 1940 has been with Wayne Merrill since 1989. They have two daughters: Alanna Rosalie b. April 23, 1966 married Gordon Murchie July 1, 1995. They have one child, Melissa Denise b. June 7, 1996; Angela Marie b. February 10, 1968 married Ray Snaychuk August 25, 2001. They have two children: Jacob Ray b. November 7, 2003 and Ayla Jean b. April 25, 2007 and stepdaughter Arlene Merrill, common-law husband Rapheal Nine and child Jose Taylor b. May 1, 2007.

4. Darlene Grace b. April 1, 1942 married Lawrence Bauer on November 16, 1960. They



Mac Lirondelle and Denise Rottot on their wedding day in 1937. Mac is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Antoine Lirondelle. Denise is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Rottot.

have six children; Steven b. October 14, 1962 lives with Loretta Lehingrat and grandson Dustin. Jeffrey b. September 16, 1965 married Irina Aparina b. August 16, 1978 on May 3, 2003. They have one child Anna Maria (Any) b. October 21, 2005. Cindy b. September 7, 1967. Lorene b. September 16, 1968 has twins Raneen and Nickolas b. December 6, 1988. Joanne b. September 29, 1969 lives with Gord Biegler has three children David Harper b. May 24, 1991, Cassandra Bauer b. November 16, 1989 and Celene b. December 1, 2002. Brent b. March 18, 1974.

5. Lawrence Victor b. December 31, 1943 married Evelyn Byer b. March 25, 1945 on July 22, 1967 they have two children Lawrence Lee b. August 10, 1969 married Melissa Larocque

and they have two children, Mac (Maguire) Lee b. August 4, 2000 and Ryan Walter b. December 12, 2005. DeAnne b. March 1, 1973 married Glen Haasz b. August 20, 1966. They have two children Karl Lawrence b. December 17, 2002 and Nick Ernest b. January 14, 2004.

They all live in the Mearns area and this is our immediate family.



Mac Lirondelle Family – 1980. Standing L to R: Shirley, Denis, Lawrence. Sitting: Darlene, Denise, Mac, Annette

Our father was the 14th child of Antoine and Lucy Lirondelle. Our parents Mack and Denise (Rottot) lived a couple of miles from the home farm. They were very hard workers, as you had to be to make a living in the hard times, what with milking cows, feeding pigs and chickens, growing big gardens and dealing with the harvesting of the vegetables and grain crops. Also helping with the threshing and chores around the farm. And all the extra cooking to feed hired help.

We all attended school in Mearns and Riviere Qui Barre. Shirley, Denis, Annette, and Darlene spent two years at the Convent in Morinville, only coming home for holidays. Annette spent one extra year in the Convent in Legal, Alberta. Lawrence (Bobby) was too young to attend the Convent (what a lucky boy he was). Lawrence and son Lawrence farm the home place and much more today.

Alice b. September 6, 1909 d. December 5, 1989 married Mike Hanley April 4, 1929. Children Lucille b. September 11, 1929, Ralph b. September 10, 1930, Roberta b. December 25, 1931, d. April 24, 2006, Harold b. October 6, 1943.

Victor b. March 17, 1911 d. January 4, 1935.

Robert b. April 25, 1912 d. July 31, 1998 married Josephine Hallé on February 22, 1936. They had two children Doris Leah b. December 20, 1939 m. George Kaleks and has two children, Valeria and Robert b. June 1, 1971. Valeria is married to David Davenport and they had two children,



Robert Lirondelle and Josephine Halle on their wedding day February 22, 1936

Jean Baptist b. October 30, 2005 and lived a half hour and Angelique b. October 21, 2006. Eddie b. September 22, 1944, died at birth.

Elie b. January 28, 1914 d. January 27, 2001 married Louise Perrealt on January 10, 1940. She was b. June 24, 1920. They adopted a girl Carol, who was born February 11, 1949. She married Terry Heard and they had one child



Elie Lirondelle and Louise Perrealt on their wedding day January 10, 1940

Kelly b. December 29, 1975. She married James Barnie and they have two children Claire b. October 31, 2002 and Sam b. December 23, 2004. Uncle Elie lived on the home place farming the land that his father and mother lived on all their lives, which is located 4 miles west and 3 miles north. Uncle Elie moved to Edmonton in November 1967, when he retired from farming. There, he and Aunt Louise had odd jobs. He was the last of his immediate family to survive until he died in 2001. His wife, Aunt Louise, is still alive to this day and doing very well. The year is 2007.

Emile b. March 13, 1915 d. March 18, 1993 married Violet McLean January 26, 1972.

Grace b. May 30, 1916 d. February 13, 1993 married Walter Coleman and had one child Pauline.



Grace Lirondelle and Walter Coleman on their wedding day February 13, 1993

Albert b. February 17, 1918 d. March 17, 1961 married Beatrice Aslin b. September 22, 1922 on January 11, 1941 and they had six children: Dianne Webb b. April 11, 1942. She has three children Michael b. October 5, 1961, Doug b. September 7, 1962, Darrell b. April 2, 1967. Sharon Wright b. October 11, 1943 d. December 14, 1976. She had four children Tracy, Sherry,

Sandra, and Maria. Donald b. February 15, 1945. David b. November 28, 1946. He had one child Cameron b. February 23, 1969. Maureen Smith b. July 2, 1949 has three children Glenn, Greg, Amanda. Rollie b. July 7, 1952 has one child Nicole. Gary Malick b. September 1952.

Ernest b. March 22, 1922 d. June 3, 1922.

And that is what happened to the 22 children our grandparents had.

Lirondelle, Lawrence (Bob) & Evelyn (Byer)

By Lawrence Lirondelle

I started school in Mearns in 1950 and went to grade five. For grade six I started in the new Cunningham School in Morinville but had to transfer to Riviere Qui Barre after one month due to over crowding at this school. I finished grade twelve in Riviere Qui Barre in 1963.

I might add at this time that I met my future wife Evelyn at the start of the grade ten year in Riviere Qui Barre. On the first day at school, all the grade ten students were seated in a classroom with a couple of vacant seats left. Then, all of a sudden, a bunch of strange looking students walked in; it was the Alcomdale kids from their "always late school bus" and they stood along the chalkboard at the side of the room. In the middle of this rag tag bunch was the prettiest little girl that I had ever seen. It was love at first sight, (for me anyway) but it took me seven more years before I married her.



Lawrence Lirondelle makes his First Communion at St. Charles Church in Mearns. Lawrence (Bobby) is in the upper left hand corner of the photo

While driving John Warshawski home on June 23, 1963, after studying chemistry for our last exam, John and I were in a car/train accident at the railway crossing one mile west of our house. John had minor cuts and bruises but I had a broken femur, which laid me up all summer in the Royal Alex Hospital in Edmonton.

After recovering from my accident, I went to the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) for a two-year course in Natural Gas Technology, starting September of 1964 and graduating in April of 1966 in the top of my class. After graduating, I was hired by Mobil Oil Canada Ltd. at a starting salary of \$453.00 per month. I was so happy I went to Waterloo Motors on Jasper Ave and bought a new car, a 1966 Cyclone GT for \$3,650.00.

After working in Whitecourt (gas plant), Drayton Valley (oil production & service rigs) and Swift Current (drilling & insitu fire flood production) on a one-year training program, I was sent to Calgary to work in the Reservoir Engineering department.

Evelyn Byer finished school in June of 1963, applied for a position with the provincial government and started working July of 1963 with the Department of Agriculture as a clerk typist with a starting salary of \$180.00 per month. She shared a house with Susie Holzer and Jenny Bergevin and worked in the parliament building.

Evelyn and I were married July 22, 1967 while I was still working in Calgary and Evelyn got a transfer to the Attorney General's office in Calgary.



Lawrence and Evelyn (Byer) on their wedding day, July 22, 1967. Lawrence is the son of Mac and Denise Lirondelle and Evelyn is the daughter of Molly and Nick Byer

That was the summer that the Husky Tower was being built and she walked by the site every day to and from work.

In November of that year Mobil transferred me to Edmonton and I spent a lot of time in the new oilfield at Rainbow Lake. In the summer of 1969, when Lawrence (Gump) was born, I quit Mobil and went to work in the service side of the oil patch. My first job was at Vanier Engineering and then with WJ Wireline Services.

We bought our first house in 1971 in Sherwood Park. It was a two storey, four bedroom, 1,600 sq. ft. house, which cost us \$27,200.00. Four years later, when I quit WJ Wireline to go farming, we sold it for exactly twice as much, \$54,400.00. At that time (1975) I bought Uncle Elie's half section farm, SW¼ 23 & NE¼ 14, for \$70,000.00 with the machinery included.

In the meantime (1979), Dad & Mom retired from farming and moved to Morinville. Evelyn and I then bought the home place, NW¼ 23, for \$120,000.00 with Denis and Grace buying the S¼ and building a house on Dad's original farm site, where Denis still lives today.

Lawrence Lee (Gump) and I started farming in 1992 after I took a five-year break from farming to manage Solid Wireline after we sold it.

Then in 1997, and for the same reasons as before, we started Remote Wireline with Jeff Bauer and Grant Friedrich as partners. We ran this company till we sold it to an income trust in 2005.

While all this was happening, our daughter DeAnne graduated from SCHC (Namao) and went on to nursing school and graduated in 1993. At this time, in Alberta, it was next to impossible to find a job in nursing because of Ralph Klein's government cut backs. DeAnne moved to BC with her friend Glen Haasz and returned to Alberta in 1998 and opened her own aesthetics shop in Morinville. While in BC she and Glen got married in 1996 and bought a house in Kamloops. In 2002 Glen and DeAnne bought SE ¼ 28 from her Uncle John Byer and moved a new modular home on it, where they still live today. Glen and DeAnne have two boys Karl (5) and Nick (3).

As for Lawrence (Gump), he graduated from SCHC (Namao) in 1987 and in September of that year flew to Australia for a nine-month agriculture exchange program working on a sheep station. Evelyn and I flew to Australia, arriving in Sydney at 8:00 o'clock New Years morning 1988, to spend some time with our son. He arrived back home on the May long weekend and surprised us at our Island Lake cabin while we were working on our pier, amid a heavy wet snowstorm.

In June of that year, Bob Kluthe and Lawrence (Gump) flew to Europe for a month of back packing and sight seeing. On his return he went to work for our old company, Solid Wireline, until we started the new company, Remote, in 1997. In November of 1998 Gump married his long time girlfriend, Melissa LaRocque, and moved from the farm to Morinville where he had earlier bought a house. On August 4, 2000 their first son Magloire (Mac), named after his great grandfather, was born. Later on, in the spring of 2004, they bought John Norman Kluthe's home quarter SE¼ 35, sold their house in Morinville and moved out to the Mearns area. On December 12, 2004 their second son, Ryan, was born.

At the present time, our son-in-law Glen Haasz and his friend Don, have their own little company called Terramen Construction and are working for a land developer in south Edmonton.

On January 1, 2007, Evelyn retired from Remote Wireline and DeAnne has taken up her position of office manager. Gump and I are still farming (grain only) plus Gump and Renee LaRocque have started into the bee business by buying out Frontier Honey in Westlock.

Evelyn and I are hoping to retire in Mazatlan, Mexico.

Lirondelle, Robert & Josephine (Halle)

By daughter, Doris Lirondelle

Robert was the 17th child of Antoine L'Hirondelle and Lucy Beaudry. Antoine was the child of Jean Batiste L'Hirondelle and Catherine Loyer. Lucy Beaudry, who was a Red River descendent, was the child of Narcissi Beaudry and Maria Breland.

Josephine Halle is the daughter of George Halle and Lea Carrier.

Robert and Josephine had two children: Doris, born Dec. 20, 1939 and Eddie, born Sept. 22, 1944. Eddie died at birth; it was a forceps birth and his neck was broken. I cannot imagine the heartbreak of my parents. It was explained to me only once by my father when I was a teenager and never discussed again.

Robert and Josephine both lived on farms in the Mearns area. My dad played hockey, baseball and curled. He played baseball for Mearns in 1932 when he was twenty years old and I (Doris) played baseball for Mearns when I was twenty years old.

Mom said that she met Dad at church. The Halle family sat in the first row in church and my dad served mass. Mom said she flirted with him during mass. When they were courting, Mom would go to Dad's place after mass for dinner. Then my cousin

Lucille Greaves shared with me that they would go out into the yard and my dad would play the guitar and sing to my mom. The song Lucille recalled was, "When it was round up time in Texas and the blooms were on the sage." My parents were married February 22, 1936 in Edmonton at St. Joseph's Cathedral with James Halle and Grandma Lea Halle witnessing.

They started their married life with a quarter section of land and a cow. Dad also worked for the telephone company. Later on my parents bought uncle Emile's quarter, which adjoined their quarter. They worked very hard on the farm and were very involved in the church. When I think about my parents' life, they were go-getters. They started off as mixed farmers: cattle, pigs, chickens and turkeys, not to mention a giant garden that I spent a lot of time weeding.

My parents then went into specialized farming. They were the first to start breeding broilers (the chickens that were ready for market in six weeks), so there always were people coming to get information from my dad, farmers who were interested, the Agriculture Department from the U of A, people from the USA Florida, all came to check on our operation as they supplied the roosters. His picture was on TV to promote this new venture.

They built a home in 1950 and we got electricity in 1951. Dad was a director for the Co-Op Store in Morinville. He worked for the federal government as manager/supervisor of the grant received for the Manawan Drainage Project.

Josephine, my mom, was called "Phine" and Mrs. Josephine Kluthe who lived in the Mearns community as well was called "Jose" so people knew whom they were talking about, Phine or Jose.

Dad was involved in the maintenance of the church. I can remember Dad and Mr. Louie LeBlanc working on the roof of the church. Mom always worked with other women to organize the chicken dinners for the parish picnics. One year she and Mrs. Altmiks, Alice's mom, were in charge of making \$2,000.00 and my mom, as an elder reminiscing about this said, "I wonder if anybody will ever know," so it is something I did not forget to include in their story. I remember that weekend as well. Alice and I were asked to clean the church to keep us occupied. We did clean the church all right, but we also found the sacramental wine and had a few samples. Oh well!

Before funeral homes came along my mom and dad prepared the dead for burial... like dressing, make up, hair.

In the late 1950's my dad had a heart attack and was told if he did not leave the farm he would be

dead in six months. He had to do something different so they leased a restaurant in Westlock, while still operating the farm. It's amazing he didn't die on the spot. I guess it was not his time.

At that time I was going to university and helping with the restaurant and farm. Shortly after that Dad sold the farm to James Halle, let the restaurant go, and in 1961 we moved to Vancouver.

That was an interesting time in our lives. When we moved we took one carload of stuff. It was the first part of January when we moved and went to Kelowna and stayed at Slim and Clara Charest's place in Westbank, just out of Kelowna. We visited with them for a while and then moved on to Vancouver. Actually, we were going to Victoria but could not manage to go to the Island. So we explored for about three or four months and got to know our way around the lower mainland quite well, in fact, better than a lot of Vancouverites.

I decided I did not want to be a teacher and started to take a business course at Vancouver Vocational Institute. Mom and Dad were scouting around for something to do and found an ad in the paper for a caretaker of a school and housekeeper for the church. This was in North Vancouver; the parish was St. Edmund's. When they went for the interview, the people who were there at that time were Mr. and Mrs. Labelle from Legal. Mom and Dad did not know them but they knew a lot of people in common. Needless to say, Mom and Dad got the job.

In 1962 there was a shortage of teachers at the school and Mom told Father McEvoy that I had been trained as a teacher. I was put on trial with a bunch of grade eight students and survived. Some of those students remind me of that when I meet them. Then I started teaching at St. Edmund's in 1962 and remained until I retired in 2005.

We went to the world fair in New York in 1965. When we returned, Dad started a new job as gardener around the clubhouse at Capilano Golf and Country Club. There he met many famous people. Mom worked with a seamstress, helping her make clothes. Dad then worked for a law firm, Braithwood, Nuttal, and McKenzie, until he retired.

Six months later he had a major heart attack and underwent open-heart surgery. He had a stroke and was left partially paralyzed. He had to walk with a cane for the remainder of his life. Mom was in good health and an awesome caregiver for Dad. Dad died in 1988 and Mom in 2003. Funeral services were at St. Paul's Indian Catholic Church on the Mission Reserve and we had memorial services for Dad at Bob and Evelyn Lirondelle's place and memorial services for Mom at Ernie and Louise's place. Their ashes are buried in the Mearns cemetery with their families.

Logan, Alfred & Louise

By daughter, Beatrice Wulff

Alfred Logan was born on December 6, 1881 in Fort Garry, Winnipeg and was the second eldest of Nathaniel and Sarah Logan. He moved to Egg Lake as a child with his father and mother and an older sister, Mary Jane. He farmed with his dad until the time of his marriage, September 1904 to Louise Anne Beaudry, the ninth child of Narcisse and Lucy Beaudry.



Alfred & Louise Logan – Sept. 1904

They farmed in the district of Alcomdale until 1927 when Dad sold his farm to Paul Hermanutz and moved to his father's farm at Egg Lake, now known as Egg Lake Coal Mine, and his parents moved to the village of Morinville.

Dad's hobbies were hunting, dancing, playing the fiddle and he loved being around horses. He always had many horses around. Dad and Mom worked very hard in their lives as the produce in the

1920's sold real cheap; grain was sold for a low price, eggs were five cents a dozen, and they sold the cream and butter for practically nothing. At that time, he farmed the land with the horses and had to do a lot of clearing of the land with the horses as well. They used dynamite to blow the stumps out, and then there was the root picking. I remember we children had to help with the root picking. When I was around twelve years old I had to sit in front of the binder on the hitch behind the four horses and use the whip once in while, as the horses got lazy towards the middle of the afternoon. Dad would sit on the seat and say, "use the whip, Sqwaychuss" meaning little girl. We all had nicknames.

Dad and Mom raised a family of twelve, six boys and six girls, so, with all these little mouths to feed, it was early to bed and early to rise, as there was lots of work to do.

- Albert Edwin, born in Egg Lake, August 19, 1905, died June 4, 1957, married January 9, 1939 to Gladys Richardson (d. May 19, 1963).
- Annie, born Egg Lake, Nov 6, 1906, died December 31, 1918.
- George, born Egg Lake, February 22, 1908, died August 27, 1908.
- Irene, born Egg Lake, September 14, 1909, died July 18, 2003, married July 23, 1935 to Leonard Golden (d. February 1991).
- Henry (Harry Rock), born Egg Lake, April 26, 1911, died September 2, 1960, married November 20, 1939 to Ruth Griffiths.
- Louise, born Alcomdale, September 2, 1914, married April 19, 1937 to Emile Chatvaire (d. March, 1994).
- Thomas Joseph, born Alcomdale, Sept 2, 1914, died November 25, 1999, married November 23, 1954 to Dorothy Ziebert.
- Margaret, born Alcomdale, April 22, 1916, married February 6, 1941 to George Beaupre.
- Edward Patrick, born Alcomdale, August 12, 1917, died July 5, 1976, married September, 1952 to Lillian Young.
- Beatrice Justine, born Alcomdale, October 17, 1918, married July 15, 1940 to Herbert Wulff (d. July 17, 1987).
- Agnes, born Alcomdale, December 21, 1921, married February 6, 1941 to Rosaire Beaupre (d. October 13, 1969), married July 9, 2004 to Leonard Seppola.
- Clifford, born Alcomdale, October 23, 1923, died March 29, 1924.

Dad had three sisters and two brothers. Mary Jane, the oldest, married Tom Dwyer. Marcia (Maude), the third child, married Tobias Cunningham. Victoria, the fourth child married

Mervin Owens. Norman, the fifth child married Clothilda Cunningham. Patrick, the sixth, married Annie Achearn. All are deceased now.

Dad (Alfred) passed away April 1934 and Mom (Louise) passed away May 3, 1939.

FAMILY GROUP				
HUSBAND:				
Born:	Logan, Alfred Joseph		Where:	
Died:	December 6, 1881	Fork Canyon	Buried:	Winnipeg
	April 11, 1934			Mearns
Husband's Father	Nathaniel Edward		Husband's Mother	Sarah Henri
Other Wives:	-----		Wives other Husbands:	-----
MARRIED:				
	September 5, 1904		Where:	Egg Lake Alberta
WIFE:				
Born:	Beaudry, Louise Ann		Where:	
Died:	November 19, 1882		Buried:	St. Albert, Alberta or Egg Lake
	May 3, 1939			Mearns
Wife's Father	Narcisse Beaudry		Wife's Mother	Lucie Breland
Other Husbands	-----		Husbands other wives	-----
CHILDREN				
	BORN	DIED	MARRIED	
1.	Albert Edwin	Egg Lake, Alta Aug. 19, 1905	Gladye Richardson January 9, 1939	Died May 19, 1963
2.	Annie	Egg Lake, Alta Nov. 6, 1906	-----	
3.	George	Egg Lake, Alta Feb. 22, 1908	-----	
4.	Irene	Egg Lake, Alta Sept. 14, 1909	Leonard Golden July 23, 1935	Feb. 1991 passed away
5.	Henry (Harry Rock)	Egg Lake, Alta Apr. 26, 1911	Ruth Griffiths November 20, 1939	
6.	Louise	Alcomdale, AL. Feb. 16, 1912	Emile Chavvaire April 19, 1937	March 1999 passed away
7.	Thomas Joseph	Alcomdale, AL. Sept. 2, 1914	Dorothy Ziesert November 23, 1954	
8.	Margaret	Alcomdale, AL. Apr. 22, 1916	George Beaudry February 06, 1941	
9.	Edward Patrick	Egg Lake, Alta Aug. 12, 1917	Lillian Young September --, 1954	
10.	Beatrice Justine	Egg Lake, Alta Oct. 17, 1918	Herbert Muller July 15, 1940	July 17, 1963
11.	Agnes	Egg Lake, Alta Dec. 21, 1921	Rosalie Beaudry February 06, 1941	Oct 18, 1969
12.	Clifford	Egg Lake, Alta Oct. 23, 1923	-----	passed away July 9, 2004

Alfred Joseph Logan Family Tree

Logan, Arthur & Delia

By daughter, Priscilla MacDonald

Arthur Joseph Logan was born in Edmonton, Alberta on July 5, 1916. He was the eldest child of seven children of Mary and Norman Logan. He grew up on the Logan farm at Egg Lake where he worked with his father and brothers.

On April 8, 1942 Art married Delia La Casse, a farm girl from Busby. They began their married life on a farm, which they purchased near Legal where their first three children, Priscilla, Geraldine and David, were born. Art wasn't fond of farming and became more interested in his cousin Tom Logan's coal mine at Egg Lake. He soon began to drive coal trucks and learned to operate heavy equipment as well as repair them. He thoroughly enjoyed this type of work as well as "socializing" with his co-workers and his friends at the mine.

In 1947 Art and Delia decided to sell their farm and move to Egg Lake Coal Mine. They bought a house and had it moved to property near the mine. In 1948 their fourth child, Doreen, was born and two



Art and Delia (LaCasse) Logan at their wedding in 1942

years later Grace arrived on April 30, 1950. In June of that same year, while attending Mass in Mearns, Art and Delia's house burned to the ground. With no where else to live nearby, they moved in temporarily with Art's parents at the Logan farm until they could find accommodation elsewhere. Luckily the old house on the Cunningham farm (now Andrew Lutz' farm) was vacant, so they were able to move there. Friends and neighbours generously offered their help and support during this difficult time. Not long after they were settled, their daughter Grace died of a heart defect at four months old.

While living there, Priscilla and Geraldine went to school at St. Charles in Mearns by school bus. One day Geraldine thought it would be a great experience for four-year old David to go to school. Unbeknown to Delia, Geraldine dressed him and took him on the bus to school. Delia looked frantically for him until she realized where he had gone. This happened only once!

The following summer Art purchased a house and had it moved to the same site as the house that



Art and Delia Logan family. Back row L to R: David, Doreen, Norman, Bunny (Bernice), Robert, Pearl, Wally. Front row L to R: Geraldine, Delia, Art, Priscilla

burned. Although Art and Delia had to start all over again, they eventually succeeded in making their new house a comfortable home for the family and life continued.

The children attended school in Mearns where the teachers, Sisters of Notre Dame, taught both academic and religious education. Sister Clarice loved baseball and softball. She was an avid fan of the World Series and would allow the class to listen to the games on the radio, but only as long as they listened quietly during class. When she had the time, Sister Clarice would be the umpire for the softball games during noon hour. One of the Sisters taught singing to those who were interested, which became the school/church choir. We must not forget the



Priscilla's birthday party celebrated at home at Egg Lake Coal Mine. Back row L to R: Honnoreana Brenneis holding Brian, Mary Short with baby, center: cousin Margaret Potvin. Front row L to R: Doreen, Geraldine, Bunny (looking at Margaret), Priscilla, Wayne Brenneis, Merle Brenneis, Eddy Short

Christmas Concerts that the Sisters organized, and the goodie bags that the CWL provided after the concerts. For most of us this was the first Christmas orange and candy of the season. Some of the great memories as a youngster in Mearns were the parish picnics, ball games, ice cream cones (for 10 cents) and the especially wonderful chicken suppers in the church basement – all those dishes to wash! Chicken has never tasted as good since then.

Living at Egg Lake Coal Mine was a place to enjoy life, as we knew it. In the winter

months, friends from the farms nearby would come to the mine and we would go tobogganing down the pit banks and skating on the ice in the pits. When the workers were off work at the mine, we would sometimes sneak into the tipple where the coal was dumped on a huge conveyer belt and we would look for pigeon's nests. If we found eggs in the nest, we would bring the eggs home to try to hatch them in a pot on the stove. We never had any luck with the eggs and we would be in trouble for going into the tipple because it was dangerous and because we would come home as black as miners from the coal dust.

While walking with our dog Rex one day, he sniffed out a duck's nest with eggs in it. We put the eggs in a sweater and took them home before they got too cold. We put them in a pot on the top of the stove over the pilot light, covered them with a washcloth and turned them every day for a week or so. This time seven cute little ducklings hatched. We were told at school to clip their wings so they would not fly away. We did this and, one by one, they all died. We lost interest in hatching eggs after that experience.

Our mother was always full of energy. In the summer, when friends came to play, Mom would organize games and she would play softball, kick the can or anti-i-over the house with us. Anti-i-over often ended up with a broken window or two. When there was a birthday, the children from the mine were

usually invited to share the cake. In the birthday cake would be a wrapped button (old maid or bachelor), a pin (seamstress), penny (poor), nickel (happy), and if you happened to get the dime you would be rich. We always tried to get the dime so we could go to the mine to buy a treat at the canteen.

In the summer Edgar Boddez would come over with his horse and cart and we would pack a lunch and travel for miles picking pop and beer bottles. For some reason there were always many more beer bottles than pop bottles! One year we picked enough bottles to buy a bicycle. We were paid 10 cents a dozen for them! Edgar would also ride his horse to our place from time to time. We would get on the horse to go for a ride and old Jessie, the horse, would run home to the barn and we would have to walk home, Edgar as well. With a family the size of ours, we had a large vegetable garden, which the older children had to weed regularly. This was a chore that we really did not like to do, but as our mother would say, "no work, no play!"

During Lent we regularly went to the Stations of the Cross on Friday evenings. When we, and some of the neighbours got our first TV, Friday night at eight o'clock was time for Zorro. After the Stations of the Cross, our parents always visited, so we would ask the Priest if we could watch Zorro on his TV. He was kind enough to allow us, since we came to church that night.

During the 1950s, Bernice (Bunny), Robert, Wally, Norman and Linda were born and Pearl in 1961. This is what is now called a 'Full House'! In 1965 Art and Delia decided to move to Morinville. The transition for the family from rural to urban living did not happen without some serious periods of adjustment. When all of the children were in school Delia began to work away from home at the bakery, then later at the dry cleaners. At this time, Art was working in the oil fields in northern Alberta and Saskatchewan.

With only Linda and Pearl still in school and the older children married or moved on to become more independent, Art and Delia moved to Edmonton in the mid 1970s. Art still worked as a mechanic in the Edmonton area. When he retired in the 1980s, he would go to the Logan farm in his spare time to help his brother Morris repair the farm machinery. Delia once again went to work at the dry cleaner nearby where she worked until she retired.

When the girls both graduated from high school and moved away from home, Art and Delia rented a lot at Gunn, Alberta. Their sons, Robert and David, built them a cute little cabin, which became their weekly hideaway. They had many friends and relatives there who would join them for barbeques,

enjoy a campfire, a celebration or go fishing. Now that they had the time, they enjoyed their many trips to British Columbia to visit their children and grandchildren who lived in various cities there.

Art enjoyed Scottish and Old Time music, as well as playing the fiddle. He was involved in the Alberta Old Time Fiddlers Association and would take his tape recorder to the contests and tape the music which he would play for us when we visited, whether we liked it or not. Art enjoyed working with his nephew, Norman Potvin, making violins. He sanded the wood and Norman put them together. He was very proud of the beautiful violins that they made together.

In the mid to late 1980s, Art's health began to deteriorate and in 1990 Art died in the St. Albert Hospital at 73 years of age.

Delia kept herself busy, riding her bicycle, walking and eventually she joined a bowling league. She became a very good bowler and travelled with her bowling team to tournaments in various places in Alberta and British Columbia where she was the winner of many trophies. Very rarely did Delia travel far from home without her 'lucky cribbage board', which she won in a bowling tournament. She was always ready for a game, which she usually won.

Delia kept busy with her activities, particularly bowling. Soon after her return home from a bowling tour in British Columbia in 1994, she was taken to the St. Albert Hospital, where she died at 72 years of age.

Logan, Morris (Shorty)

By niece, Priscilla MacDonald (Logan)

Morris (Shorty) Daniel was the fourth child of Norman and Mary Logan, born October 22, 1922 in Edmonton. As a youngster he was shy and very independent. He was a bachelor and lived on the Logan farm most of his life.

Morris was the family farmer. He raised pigs, chickens and milked cows and sold milk and cream in the early years. He put in grain crops and made hay and silage to feed his animals during the winter months. He and his mother would clean, grade and pack eggs and butcher chickens they sold at the Edmonton City Market on Saturdays. Often one or two of his brother Arthur's children would have the bus drop them off after school to help pluck the chickens on Friday.

Morris also worked at Egg Lake Coal Mine during the winter months for a few years. His cousin Tom Logan owned the mine and there he met Henry Paepe, Tom's business partner. In 1949 Morris, Tom and Henry took a trip to Europe. Since Belgium was Henry's homeland, he was the tour guide. They visited various countries, saw many historical sites



Morris Logan's mother, Mary Logan (nee Cunningham) beside the chapel

and took part in many 'social activities'. They also went to Lourdes, which was one of the highlights of the trip for Morris. After countless stories about the trip, it was obvious that all of them had enjoyed themselves.

After the death of his father in 1952, Morris stayed on the farm and took great care of his mother until her death in 1975. He continued farming until the mid 1990s, although he no longer raised cattle or

chickens. His health began to deteriorate to the point where he was no longer able to do the heavy work required of a farmer, so he rented his land to Kevin and Connie Kluthe, who later bought his farm.

Although Morris remained single all of his life, he enjoyed being around children. He taught some of Art's children to drive the tractor, truck and the combine when they were able to help with the harvest. This help at times caused him more work! There was the time the combine got so plugged up it took him a



Morris Logan – 1953

day to get it back in the field again, or when making hay, the tractor backed into the rake and bent the prongs. He would do the necessary repairs and carry on with his willing helpers. He was a very patient man!

Morris enjoyed classical music and loved to hear and play old time music. He enjoyed playing the fiddle and taught others who were interested in learning to play. He could also play piano, strum the guitar and was known to dance an occasional jig or step dance when he was in the mood. When family or friends came by to visit in the summer they would play a game or two of horseshoe and very often there would be a few tunes played on the fiddle and piano, followed by a nice meal which was sometimes pot luck. Morris spent many hours playing the fiddle when he was alone learning a new tune, or just practicing an old one.



Morris Logan on the fiddle at a barn dance at Yvonne Kluthe's – 1999

Morris had his lifelong friendships with fellow fiddler Henry Houle and especially his neighbours Johnny and Yvonne Kluthe. He was best man at both of their weddings and at others. In 1981 he went on a trip across Canada with Johnny and Yvonne, which he enjoyed thoroughly.

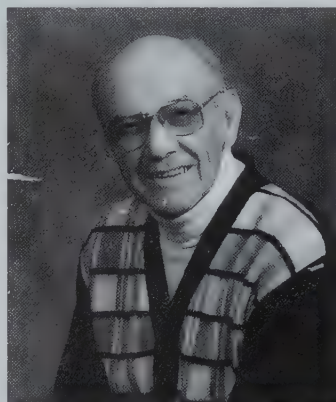
Morris' love for the Catholic Church was obvious to all who knew him. He gave to many Catholic charities and had a foster child in Peru



As a pastime Morris made rosaries. Morris got this rosary from Lourdes in 1949

whom he supported for many years. He was a member of the Mearns church choir and when there was a church function, or the church was in need of repair, Morris was always willing to do his share. In the later years of his life he made rosaries which he donated to many parishes, some as far away as BC and Mexico. Many of the rosaries were given to children at their First Communion. During Advent and Lent he would make at least one rosary each day, if his health permitted. He also faithfully attended the annual Pilgrimage in Lac-Saint-Anne, when he would bring home his yearly supply of holy water.

During the mid to late 1990s Morris was still living at the farm and found the winters too long and had trouble coping with the cold weather. He would joke about going 'south for the winter', when in fact he would only go as far as St. Andrew's Senior Residence in Edmonton in the fall, and back to the farm in the spring. In 1999 he moved permanently to a senior's residence in Morinville. This was closer to the farm and more convenient for his friends to visit him and he with them. He continued to play the fiddle and occasionally relatives and friends would stop by and play music with him. He still



Morris Logan photo taken in 1999

had his car and, when the weather was nice enough, he would take an afternoon drive to visit his farm. He loved his country home at Egg Lake, the well-groomed yard, the beautiful flowers he was so proud of and most of all he loved his family and friends.

Morris' health got worse in the year 2000 and after a brief stay in hospital in Edmonton on April 30, 2001 Morris died peacefully at 78 years of age. It was his wish to donate his body to the University of Alberta Hospital, Anatomical Department. His ashes are buried in the Logan plot at the St. Charles Cemetery in Mearns.

The Robert Logan Family

Robert Logan of Red River and his Descendants

Sources

Geraldine Logan, Percival's wife

Jessie Logan, Samuel's daughter

Priscilla McDonald (Logan), Arthur's daughter

The history of the Logan family in Canada began in the 1700s. Records indicate that all of the Logans and their families and their marital connections, including the Cunninghams, worked for the Northwest Company and the Hudson's Bay Company. The officers and bourgeois of these companies were well educated and were required to keep journals for their superiors in London and Montreal. Many of these men came from prominent families in colonial society and had gone into the fur trade business to make their fortunes over approximately a twenty-year period beginning with the French defeat in 1759 and the start of the American Revolution in 1775. This trend is well documented in the *Encyclopedia Canadiana* and the *Dictionary of National Biography* (D.N.B.), as well as in many fur trade books published by the Hudson's Bay Company, Champlain Society, and in articles and periodicals such as *Alberta History*, *The Beaver* and *The Pageant* of Manitoba.

The adult life of Robert Logan is well documented, although very little family history information is known regarding his early life and his forbears. According to the *Encyclopedia Canadiana* and D.N.B., Robert's father was a West India planter who moved to Montreal after a slave uprising in India. Although there are no formal records of the family in Montreal, Robert was noted to be fluently bilingual, suggesting he was raised in a French-speaking environment.

Robert was born either in 1773 or 1775 and in 1801 he began working for the Northwest Company, a union of Montreal fur traders who were in opposition to the monolithic Hudson's Bay Company. Robert worked as a clerk representing the

Northwest Company at a post in Sault Ste Marie from 1806 to 1814. In 1809 Robert's superior was reprimanded "for allowing Mr. Logan to take a woman from the Indians." Robert's union with "Mary", a Saulteaux or Chippewa Indian was "à la façon du pays", a long-term relationship due to the absence of a clergyman, where they eventually married at Red River in 1821. However, prior to their formal union, they produced three children in Sault Ste Marie, two girls and one boy. The children were baptized following their marriage in 1821. The boy, Thomas, was the father of Nathaniel Logan.

Records note that while living in Sault Ste Marie, the Logan family was driven out during the war of 1812 by American forces under the command of Major Holmes. The Northwest Company steamer was burned and according to family stories, an Indian nurse, Mooya, who accompanied the family to Red River, used to talk about their flight from the burning fort in Sault Ste. Marie.

Records note that Robert became dissatisfied with his progress in the Northwest Company and returned to Montreal where he was persuaded by Colin Robertson to work for the Hudson's Bay Company. Records are unclear whether he took his family with him at this juncture. While employed, he helped Mr. Robertson to prepare for a trip to the Athabasca country and accompanied the brigades there in 1815 as second in command to John Clarke. His family was with him on this ill-fated expedition when 16 of the party starved to death. It says much for his immense stamina and that of his family as they survived the trip despite very difficult conditions.

In 1815-1816 Robert was in charge of the Ile à la Crosse District in Saskatchewan and the following year he was in charge of the Rock Depot. His journals and experiences are available at the Hudson's Bay Company Archives in Winnipeg, Manitoba. It appears Robert was literate and well educated as his journals are full of interesting details as he remarked on the explorer David Thompson during a visit. He also noted Patrick Cunningham was at his post. Their descendants were to marry a hundred years later. By 1818-1819 Robert was posted at Rainy Lake, Ontario (Fort Frances) where he gradually rose to Chief Factor (partner) in the Hudson's Bay Company.

Robert continued to be dissatisfied with his life as a fur trader and in 1819 he was appointed to oversee Lord Selkirk's affairs at Red River (Winnipeg) in the absence of Governor Alexander MacDonnell. Robert remained at the settlement and prospered. Governor Simpson described Robert in

1822 as "the best settler about the place without exception, is sober, industrious and active, and has a spirit of enterprise and improvement about him, with the command of a little money". In 1825 Robert purchased the remains of Fort Douglas and a windmill for 400 pounds. This powered the first gristmill in Red River and the enterprise prospered. It was not long before he built a large house for his family and owned land along the river, which is now Logan Avenue and Main Street in Winnipeg.

As the settlement at Red River grew, Robert was drawn into public life. In 1823 he was a councilor of Assiniboia and in 1835 he was appointed a Justice of the Peace and later Magistrate. Five years later he was appointed Chairman of the Board of Public Works while he frequently acted as a consultant for the Hudson's Bay Company on matters of Indian Affairs.

In 1838 Robert's wife Mary died. Robert remarried approximately one year later to an English widow, Sarah Ingham. Sarah came to the colony as a companion to one of the teachers and had run a school for a short time. Robert's youngest daughter, Barbara, was a small child at the time of her mother's death. By his first wife, Robert had twelve children and four more with his second wife.

In 1851 Robert participated as a member of a committee who obtained a Presbyterian minister for Red River. The fact that he was a Presbyterian suggests that the family was not far removed from their Scottish roots.

Robert's last years were spent looking after his large family and his many business enterprises. His children married into other fur trading families of Scottish origin and appear to have been prosperous. However, following Robert's death there were some ill feelings between his widow and some of his children by his first wife. Robert's heir was his youngest son, Alexander, who inherited a great deal of property in Winnipeg, all now part of the downtown industrial area. It is thought that Robert may have felt that he had helped his older children sufficiently and his eldest son, Thomas, was not involved in the complaints by Robert Jr. and others.

Many local histories of Eastern Canada mention the Logan family. Robert also appears as a character in the novel by E. Osler, *Light in the Wilderness*. Robert's son, Alexander, who was three times Mayor of Winnipeg, is mentioned in Pierre Berton's book *The Last Spike*. Barbara Logan, youngest daughter of Robert, is mentioned in W. Healy's *Women of Red River* (1922), as was her father.

Robert Logan died in 1866 at the age of 91. His best memorial may be the many trees he planted in Winnipeg, still standing in the downtown area today.

In his last years he stood aside from the growing factionalism in Red River. However, his family did not and was supportive and pro-union with Canada. William Logan, Robert's son, is mentioned in *Women of Red River* as his wife hid Dr. Schultz under her robe in a sleigh, seating her child on him and thus hiding him when he escaped from Louis Riel. Dr. Schultz later became Lt. Governor of Manitoba.

It is intriguing that not more can be learned of the early years and ancestry of Robert Logan. One wonders also why he did not return to Montreal at any time after 1814. However, this may have been due to the growing bigotry towards Metis and Indians in the Victorian days. There is no doubt that his devotion to his family was great. Altogether he is an ancestor to be proud of: upright, moral, intelligent and hardy.

Robert Logan

Birth: Montreal, 1773 or 1775
 Death: Red River, 1866
 Married: First wife, 1821 to Mary, Red River, Manitoba
 2nd Wife, 1839 (approx) to Sarah Ingham
 History: 1801, Entered service with Northwest Company
 1818-1819, Chief Factor, Hudson's Bay Company
 1819, appointed to oversee Selkirk's affairs

Mary Logan (surname unknown, she was Saulteaux or Chippewa)

Birth: Sault Ste Marie, Date unknown
 Death: Red River, 1838
 Marriage: 1821, Red River, Manitoba, Robert and Mary
 They were married "a la facon du pays" from 1809 to 1821 until a clergyman was available in Red River, where their children were baptized.

Children:

Ann
 Birth: 1809, Sault Ste Marie
 Death: 1859, Red River
 Elizabeth (Sutherland)
 Birth: 1810, Sault Ste Marie
 Death: Date unknown, Red River
 Married into the Sutherland family, related by marriage to Hardestys, which were forebears to Peter Lougheed.
 Thomas*
 Birth: 1812, Sault Ste Marie
 Death: date unknown, Red River
 He worked as a miller and farmer at Red River
 Married: First wife, Margaret Cummings
 2nd wife, Mary Anne Dease, marriage date unknown, Red River. Birth date unknown, death date unknown, Red River. Daughter of Chief Trader John Warren Dease and niece to Chief Factor Petter Warren Dease
 Children: Thomas and Mary Anne had a large family, some moved to Alberta by Red River oxen carts. One child was a son, **Nathaniel Logan**
 Mary
 Birth: 1814, Sault Ste Marie
 Death: date unknown
 Ellen
 Birth: 1816, Swampy Lake
 Death: 1831, Red River
 Robert Jr.
 Birth: 1818, Lac La Pluise

Death: date unknown, Red River
 William
 Birth: 1820 Red River
 Death: date unknown
 William was Pro-unification of Canada. W. Healy mentions him in the book *Women of Red River*
 Nathaniel
 Birth: 1822, Red River
 Death: date unknown, Red River
 Barbara
 Birth: 1824, Red River
 Death: date unknown, Red River
 Barbara is mentioned in W. Healy's *Women of Red River*
 Kenneth
 Birth: 1826, Red River
 Death: date unknown
Sarah Logan (Ingham), 2nd Wife
 Birth: Unknown
 Death: Unknown
 Marriage: 1839, Red River
 Sarah was a widow when she met and married Robert Logan. They married a year after Mary's death and they had four children. Sarah operated a school.
Children:
 Sarah
 Birth: 1840, Red River
 Death: date unknown
 Sarah married Henry McDermott
 James
 Birth: 1841, Red River
 Death: date unknown
 Twin brother to Alexander
 Alexander
 Birth: 1841, Red River
 Death: date unknown, Red River
 Alexander inherited a large amount of property from Robert Logan, which is now all part of Winnipeg downtown industrial. He was three-time Mayor of Winnipeg
 Alice
 Birth: 1844, Red River
 Death: date unknown

Alexander Logan married the daughter of Richard Lane, fur trader, and Mary McDermott, daughter of Chief Factor McDermott of the Hudson's Bay Company. When Mary Lane died at the Pacific Coast, her two young daughters, one named Elizabeth, were sent back to their grandparents at Red River making the journey through the mountains in the saddlebags on horses. Elizabeth Logan married into the Sutherland family who was connected by marriage to the Hardestys, forebears of Peter Lougheed, the Premier of Alberta. Several marriages also connected the Logans and the Cunninghams with the Sutherlands.

Thomas Logan, Robert's eldest son, was a miller and farmer at Red River, likely set up in business by his father. His first wife, Margaret Cummings, died within a year of their marriage. His second wife, Mary Anne Dease, was the daughter of Chief Trader John Warren Dease and niece of Chief

Factor Peter Warren Dease, the Arctic explorer. Thomas and Mary Anne had a large family, some of whom moved to Alberta when the country opened up for settlement.

Nathaniel Logan, son of Thomas and Mary Anne, was born in 1849 in Red River and later married Sarah Henry, daughter of Francois and Angelique Henry and became a Catholic. They moved in 1882 by Red River cart and oxen from Winnipeg to Edmonton, Alberta. Nathaniel started the first Hudson's Bay Post in the area. However, the homestead in Edmonton was not successful and he later took up land at Egg Lake, north of Morinville, where he was also connected with the Hudson's Bay Company. He was prominent in local affairs being a strong Liberal. He eventually acquired a good deal of property.



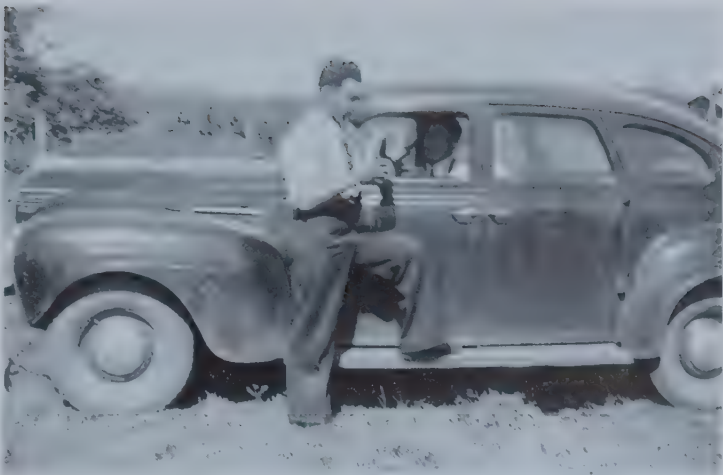
Norman Logan family in front of their 1928 Ford. L to R: Norman, Percival, Mary, Grace, Morris & Arthur.

Norman Logan, second son of Nathaniel and Sarah, was born in 1887 at Egg Lake. In 1914 he married Mary Clothilde Cunningham at Egg Lake, descendant of another fur trading family. Mary was born in 1894 in Red River and died in 1975 in Edmonton. Norman and Mary had a long marriage and a large family. They had a mixed farm near Morinville and raised and sold cattle, chickens and turkeys at Edmonton City Market.

Norman farmed and trapped the land given to him by his father at Egg Lake, but was more interested in local politics and served on the Council for 25 years, several of which were as Reeve. He was a strong member of the Social Credit party of Alberta. He died in 1954 in Morinville.

Children:
Arthur

Birth: 1916, Edmonton
 Death: 1990, Edmonton
 Married: Delia Lacasse on April 8, 1942
 Arthur (Art) and Delia had eleven children. Art worked on machinery and equipment as a Heavy Duty Mechanic. He enjoyed spending



Arthur Logan (standing) and Percival (in car) at farm yard at Egg Lake – 1942

time with his grandchildren and at his cabin on Lac Ste. Anne. He also loved playing the fiddle and enjoyed listening to Old Time Music.
 Delia Lacasse was born in 1922 in Edmonton. She was raised on a farm near Busby, Alberta. Delia died in 1994 in St. Albert. She was a full time homemaker and enjoyed playing cribbage, bowling and spending time with family.

- Grace
 - Birth: 1918, Edmonton
 Currently resides in Chilliwack, BC
 - Married: Alfred Potvin in 1942. Alfred was born in 1918. They had eight children. Grace is very active within the Catholic Church and Alfred enjoys oil painting.
- Percival
 - Birth: 1920, Edmonton
 - Death: 1986
 - Married: Geraldine Kelly. Percival (Percy) and Geraldine had seven children. He served in the Royal Canadian Air Force and was shot down in France during WWII. He survived by making his way to England where he met the love of his life, Geraldine.
- Morris
 - Birth: 1922, Edmonton
 - Death: 2001, Edmonton
 - Morris (Shorty) lived all his life as a bachelor and farmed the land north of Morinville. His nieces, nephews, brothers, sisters and friends were his family. He loved to play horseshoes and most of all he loved to play Old Time Music on his fiddle.
- Samuel
 - Birth: 1925, Edmonton
 - Death: 1998, January
 - Married: Dorothy in 1948 until 1963. Samuel (Sam) Norman Logan enjoyed singing and playing guitar and loved visiting with family and friends.
- Dorothy Joseph

The Logan farm was located on the northwest corner of Egg Lake. The original log house was lived in until 1943 when a new home was built. Grandpa Norman Logan did landscaping around the



Norman & Mary Logan's Children – circa 1942. Samuel, Morris, Grace, Percival, and Arthur

new house. He planted apple, crab apple and plum trees in front and a beautiful rock garden and walkway on the north side.

On Fridays, in late afternoon, it was always chicken plucking and also egg grading and egg washing time for market in Edmonton on Saturday. I would stay with Grandpa Norman Logan at the farm to feed the chickens and water the animals. Grandma Mary Logan would bring home fresh fruit, which was much appreciated as a reward for the hard work.

The highlights of the year were the big Christmas and Easter celebrations at the farm. Lots of food and desserts were prepared and a festive atmosphere was present. Grandma Mary Logan would prepare for weeks for these special occasions. As an adult, the old time music became very special to me. I learned to play the piano and was able to chord to the other instruments, guitars, fiddle and sometimes banjo and accordion. The adults and little ones would dance, sing or listen to the music. Grandma Mary Logan would play scrabble or a game at the dining room table with whoever was interested. Many, many Sunday afternoons in summer saw friends or neighbours dropping by to play horseshoes with Morris and, of course, the music would also start later.

The Logan family was very supportive of the little church in Mearns, St. Charles. Many received the sacraments of Baptism, First Communion, Confirmation and Marriage at St. Charles Church. There are many Logans who were laid to rest at St. Charles Cemetery. St. Charles Church continues to stand tall in Mearns although the schools and



Samuel on guitar, Percival on the fiddle, and Morris on the guitar

elevators are gone. The Church has been remodeled and is still the heart of the community.

The Logan farm at Egg Lake was sold to neighbours in 2002 but continues to provide those who lived or visited there with many great memories.

Lovelock, Thomas & Esther

(Reprinted from "*Decades of the Independence District*" published in 1981)

Thomas Frank Lovelock was born in London, England on July 24, 1873 and Esther Jane (Green) Lovelock was born on May 18, 1872 at Farnboro Hunts, England.

Thomas Lovelock came to Canada in May of 1903. He sailed from Liverpool on April 28 with his wife and three small children; Violet, Mabel and Hilda, a baby of three months. They came directly to the Edmonton area, which was little more than a fort at that time.

He had worked in a large drapery store in England starting at the age of 13. He later worked up to head of the postal department.

When he arrived in Edmonton he first filed on land just west of the Pembina Hall, then he finally settled at Seymour in the fall of 1903 on SE 6-57-27-W4, which was his homestead. There was hardly a wagon trail from Edmonton to Seymour: The Lovelock family arrived at their new home by oxen drawn wagon and had to cut the dense brush before they could make room to pitch a tent in which they lived until Thomas could build a log house. The nearest neighbor was one mile away with no roads and to our recollection his name was Johnson.

Thomas's sister and brother-in-law, Laura and George Jenkins had sailed from Liverpool with the Lovelocks, remaining in Edmonton longer but came later to settle in the Seymour district on SE 36-56-1-

W5. In 1920, they moved to Salmon Arm, British Columbia.

In winter Thomas went out on survey crews, slept in a tent in 60-70 degree below zero weather, and ate frozen meals with mitts on. He dug ditches in Edmonton and was one of the employees who worked on the basement of the McLeod building. He walked from Edmonton to the homestead one day, thirty-six miles with a pack on his back, carrying food supplies for his family. He well remembers one such trip, as when he was crossing a creek which runs across the SW 5-57-27-W4 (his C.P.R. land) he fell into the creek, pack and all. There was damp food from that trip.

Thomas gave a great deal of credit to his wife who was a wonderful mate and a true pioneer, who constantly worked by his side and raised the family. While he was away from home working, she really kept the home fires burning. She was left alone with three small children and no means of communication. In case of illness, the nearest doctor was in Edmonton and she had no means of transportation to reach him. At that time the family was living in a tent. Esther Lovelock cooked outside and did not even have a gun for protection from wild animals. One vivid recollection during logging operations was of Thomas pulling his shoulder out, and had to be driven to Edmonton by team and sleigh. This was later on as the farming was done with oxen before getting horses.

They hauled the farm produce to Edmonton by team and sleigh. On one such trip, daughter Violet accompanied her father and froze her feet. She had to have several toes amputated. In those days rocks were heated in the oven and wrapped in blankets to have some heat in the sleigh while travelling. In the latter 1920's, Thomas bought a Model T Ford, which was a great change from walking to Edmonton and back.

In the early days of farming with oxen, Mr. Mills, the grandfather of Britton and Alan Mills, and Thomas Lovelock used to work together. Once William Mills planted a garden on a Lovelock piece of cleared land but the Lovelock daughters pulled it out. It was a tragedy then, but is humorous now.

Thomas was the first storekeeper and postmaster at Seymour from 1908 until he moved to Alcomdale in 1919.

As time went on, four more children were added to the family: Helene, Frank, Eva and Alice.

Mr. James Kelly held church service in the early days in Independence, Seymour and Sion. Where there was not a church, service was held in the homes. Later Mr. Kelly held services in the Alcomdale School. When Mr. Lovelock sold his

store in Alcomdale, he donated a piece of land for an Anglican church in which he placed a plaque in honor of Mr. Kelly, the first minister. James Kelly was truly one of the most sincere Christians who never refused to help anyone no matter what religion, race or creed.

The Lovelocks resided at Seymour until the fall of 1919 when Thomas, along with Mr. Ross Pettibone and Dr. Alcombrack originated the Town of Alcomdale. Ross Pettibone and Thomas Lovelock went into partnership in a general store business. Thomas became the postmaster in 1920 and held that position until August 2, 1946.

Over the years, Thomas purchased and farmed the SW 5-57-27-W4 known as C.P.R. land and later with son Frank, the NW 5-57-27-W4 and NE 6-57-27-W4. They also farmed the NE 36-56-27-W4 located one mile west of Alcomdale.

When Kingsley School opened, there were perhaps only eight pupils attending. Three Lovelocks, two or three Kennetts, Maggie Walker and Violet Lovelock attended after having first gone to school in Independence. Thomas was secretary of the Kingsley School Board for many years. Kingsley was located one half mile west of the homestead and all the Lovelock children attended it. After moving to Alcomdale, Thomas was secretary of the school district. He was also Justice of the Peace and Registrar from 1907 until 1946.

Thomas Lovelock helped organize the Northern Alberta Dairy Pool and was active in the organization of the U.F.A. throughout the province. He also helped to organize the Poultry Marketing Board travelling to different points for meetings in the province.

He did custom threshing at Seymour, Alcomdale and Busby.

When Mr. Lovelock was first Postmaster at Alcomdale he had to meet the trains to get incoming and send outgoing mail. Since there was no telecommunications he spent a great deal of time waiting in the station not knowing whether the train would be on time or hours late on the return trip to Edmonton. He recalled one time of waiting on into the middle of the night and decided to give up and go home. He had just got into bed when he heard the train whistle about two miles up the track. Needless to say that was one time he missed the train but that didn't happen more than twice over all the years.

In 1946 the store business was sold to Richard and Charles Whitson. Mr. Lovelock had bought Mr. Pettibone out in 1924.

Mr. and Mrs. Lovelock moved to California until the spring of 1948. Then another grocery store was bought in Seattle, Washington. Daughter Hilda

and her father operated this business until the fall of 1953.

In September of 1953, Mrs. Lovelock passed away after 6 to 8 months of illness. The grocery business was sold and Thomas moved back to Alberta where he spent some time on the farm. In the winter he lived in either Seattle or California with daughters. In 1955, Thomas moved to Edmonton living with his daughter Eva Aslin until his death on October 28, 1962.

Over the years, the Lovelock family all married and scattered.

Violet Bennett moved to Los Angeles and married there. There were no children.

Mabel Greslie after marriage moved to San Francisco and then to Los Angeles. She had two daughters, five grandchildren and one great grandson all living in California.

Hilda Turcott married and lived in Busby and Los Angeles for a short time. She then lived in Seattle and Edmonton. She then spent time with her daughter Allouise Gehrke, and three grandchildren in Solkotna, Alaska.

Helen Gerke married in Jasper, Alberta. She lived in Vancouver, British Columbia and Seattle. She retired in Lummi Island, Washington. She had no children.

Frank married Alice Palmer. They farmed in the Alcomdale district. They had seven children; Fred, Jean, Beatrice, Richard, Helen, Thomas and Myles.

Eva married Theodore H. Aslin and lived in Alcomdale. They went on to live in Edmonton. They had one daughter, Avis Lawrence and three grandchildren.

Alice married Nap Aslin and lived in Alcomdale. They went on to live in Edson, Alberta and had no children.

Lutgen, Wayne & Jeanne Family

By Jeanne

Wayne, the third of five children of Gregore John Lutgen and Bernadine Weller from Heisler (Spring Lake), Alberta and his wife Jeanne (nee Verbeek) moved to the Alcomdale/Mearns area in 1978; the same year their first child was born. They moved onto the bare quarter section building up a chicken farm and raising their five children: Christy Lee, David, Daniel, Gary and Robert.

The land had been previously owned by Jeanne's parents, Albert and Kathleen (nee Perrott) Verbeek of Morinville. Kathleen Perrott grew up in the Riviere Qui Barre and Calahoo area. Albert and Kathleen had purchased the quarter just around the corner from Uncle Eddie and Aunt Mary (Perrott)



Wayne & Jeanne Lutgen Family – 1986

Verhulst of Mearns. Jeanne's parents broke the land and picked roots leaving a nice windbreak "for one of their 10 children would surely one day build there". I never realized it would be my family. We would come yearly and get our Christmas tree from the peat mossy bush. Dad would travel back and forth to farm the land bringing equipment 16 miles from the home-place. The roads then were not graveled like now, were narrower and had trees on each side making it a scenic drive but not so nice when weather was cold or wet.

Dad said the neighbours up here were good people. There was a Mr. Emile DeRudder who could fix any machinery or motor brought to him. The Spargo Machine Shop and Dealership was right in Alcomdale as was the commonly seen grain elevator; all so close. The animals and birds were more numerous then. Dad told us of seeing bobcats, lynx, deer, moose as well as the coyotes, badgers and jackrabbits. There were partridges, wild pheasants as well as owls, hawks and woodpeckers of several varieties.

Our Verbeek family had earlier connections to Mearns area as Great Grandfather Theodore Jacobs had migrated from Belgium and rented and worked farmland around Egg Lake area in 1907. In 1914 Grandfather Henri Verbeek, a cavalry soldier and miller of grains, with his wife Mathilde Jacobs came to Canada with their then five of 10 children. They traveled 13 days by boat and then crossed the country to join the family already in the area. The



Lutgen family "Chicken Farm" – Sept. 1988

youngest, a baby girl Juliette Verbeek, died of pneumonia at Morinville. The oldest, Mary Verbeek, later in life married Alphonse Houle and moved to a farm in the Mearns area raising three children; Simon, George and Juliette, who faced many challenges growing up as Aunt Mary developed rheumatoid arthritis and was bed ridden.

Wayne's family had a surprise connection to Mearns, as his mother's sister, Theresa Weller married Maurice Brenneis, from a well known family still living here. The Wellers and Lutgens migrated from Luxenburg, Europe to Minnesota, USA, then both families came to the Heisler, Alberta area.



Lutgen Family – Daniel, Gary, Jeanne & Wayne, Christy Lee & Shawn Gould, David, Sarah (Saunders) & Bella, Robbie

Presently Christy Lee is married to Shawn Gould of Charlotte Town, P.E.I. and David Lutgen is married to Sarah Saunders of Cardiff, Alberta. They have one girl, Bella Elizabeth and another child on the way. Our other three sons are working, going to college and helping us with farming.

Lutz, Andrew & Anastazia Family

By Anastazia Lutz & Sue Bayley

Andrew was one of a family of nine children born to Valentine and Sophia Lutz of Morinville. Andrew was born in Edmonton on December 15, 1926. He was raised on a farm SE 19-56-25-W4th in the Morinville area.

Andrew attended Thibeault School in Morinville for the first two years of his schooling then attended Riopel School until grade eight. Andrew took over the family farm with his two brothers Joseph and Anthony after his father was killed in a tragic farm tractor accident in September of 1944. During the winter months Andrew worked in the sawmill in Clearwater, B.C. and in the foothills.

Anastazia Dziewiontkowski was born in Vimy, Alberta on August 30, 1930. Her parents, Anton and Helen Dziewiontkowski from Highridge, moved from Vimy in June 1932 and settled on the Jim Hay homestead NE 22-58-2-W5th at Heaton Moor. Her first teacher was Miss. Brown. She attended Highridge School for grade one to grade nine. A Christmas concert was a yearly event, fun to plan and Santa Clause came each year and distributed the gifts and candy bags. The annual summer picnics were also a big event. Anastazia attended high school in Edmonton and graduated from Victoria Composite High School in 1949.

On June 26, 1951 Andrew and Anastazia were married at St. Jean Baptiste Catholic Church in Morinville. They



Andrew & Anastazia Lutz's Wedding – June 26, 1951



Andrew & Anastazia Lutz Family. Back row L to R: John, Sue, & Ken. Front row: Andrew & Anastazia



Aerial photograph of the Andrew, Anastazia, Ken & Maxine Lutz farm.



Andrew & Anastazia Lutz on their 50th Wedding Anniversary – June 26, 2001

settled on a farm formerly owned by Toby Cunningham on SW 31-56-25-W4, which was purchased by Andrew's parents in 1941.

Andrew and Anastazia had two sons and one daughter: John, Ken and Sue.

Andrew and Anastazia farm with their two sons. They run a dairy operation and plant wheat, oats, barley and canola.

On June 26, 2001, Andrew and Anastazia celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary at the Rendezvous Club in Morinville. They enjoy traveling and have gone to Hawaii, California, Texas, Wisconsin, Arizona, Montana, Florida, Acapulco and Tahiti.

Lutz, John & Linda

By John Lutz

John was born on March 8, 1954. He started school in 1960 and attended St. Charles School in Mearns. His first teacher was Sister Francine. He took his junior high at Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre and graduated from St. Albert High School in 1972.

He obtained his Private Pilot License in April 1974 and his Commercial Pilot License in October 1975. He also has his night endorsement and twin-engine endorsement. John flew mostly private and did some commercial flying.



John & Linda Lutz – March 1, 1980

John married Linda Wiebe on March 1, 1980 at St. Charles Parish in Mearns.

Linda was born on June 16, 1957 and is the daughter of George and Helen Wiebe from Altona, Manitoba.

They settled on the former Firmen and Lorene Boddez place, NW 30-56-25-W4.

They have three children. Heather was born on October 15, 1983. She is in her fourth year of nursing school. On December 12, 1987 a brother, Nathan, arrived. He is attending Sturgeon Composite High School. On May 27, 1996 another brother, Tyler, completed their family. Tyler is home schooling.



John & Linda Lutz Family. John, Tyler, Linda, Heather, Nathan

Lutz, Joseph & Evelyn

By Evelyn



Joe and Evelyn Lutz – June 20, 1960

Joseph, son of Valentine and Sophia Lutz, was born October 20, 1929. He was raised on a farm in the Morinville area. Evelyn, daughter of Alphonse and Exilda Constantin, was born July 15, 1942 and was raised on a farm in the Villeneuve area.

Joseph and Evelyn Lutz were married June 20, 1960 in St. Peter's Catholic Church in Villeneuve. They bought the former Douziech farm in the Mearns area and began a mixed farm of their own. They were blessed with nine children.

- Marie was born May 9, 1961. She married Richard Vansevenandt on April 9, 1983. They have four children: Joyce, Kim, Melody and Ron. Marie died of cancer Oct. 4, 2007 at the age of 46.
- Doreen was born April 20, 1964. She married Mervin Duchscher on April 19, 1986. They have four children: Kyla, Jamie, Kierra and Savannah.
- Judy was born November 9, 1966. She married Roger Van Hecke on June 4, 1988. They have four children: Kasara, Tanysha, Dalin and Nakysta.
- Jo-Anne was born July 19, 1968. She married Ward Middleton on June 29, 1991. They have two children: Ian and Josie.
- Danny was born December 5, 1969.
- Kerry was born May 23, 1971. She married Mark Vansevenandt on July 11, 1992. They have four children: Siria, Dana, Vanessa and Amanda.
- Wayne was born September 17, 1972. He married Katherine Woods on June 23, 2001. They have four children: Caleb, Adele, Sophia and baby Silas, born June 5, 2007
- Michael was born July 20, 1974. He married Daisy Lopez.
- Jackie was born August 12, 1977. She married Jody Stitsen on April 27, 2002.

All of their children live in the area. At the present time, Joseph and Evelyn farm with Danny, Wayne and Michael.



Joseph and Evelyn Lutz Family Farm – Nov. 1990



Joe and Evelyn Lutz Family – Christmas 2006

Lutz, Ken & Maxine

By Ken Lutz

Ken was born on March 24, 1962. He started school in 1968 at St. Charles School in Mearns. His first teacher was Sister Roberta.

He took his junior high at Camilla school in Riviere Qui Barre and graduated from Sturgeon Composite High School in 1980.

Ken married Maxine Constantin on July 23, 1983 at St. Vital Catholic Church in Beaumont. Maxine was born on April 30, 1965, the daughter of Alcide and Elise Constantin from Beaumont.

They live on the home place SW 31-56-25-W4 and farm with Ken's father, Andrew. In his spare time he enjoys building furniture, bedroom suites and cupboards.

Ken and Maxine have three children, Lesley, Brian and Kelly.

Lesley was born on April 28, 1982 and is a Registered Nurse at the University Hospital in Edmonton. Lesley married Chad Kieser on August 14, 2004. Chad was born on May 3, 1982 and is the son of Don and Brenda Kieser from Morinville.



Ken & Maxine Lutz – July 23, 1983



Ken & Maxine Lutz Family. Back row: Brian & Kelly; Front row: Lesley, Maxine & Ken



Chad & Lesley (Lutz) Kieser on their wedding day, August 14, 2004

Lesley and Chad make their home on the former Maurice Tellier place SW 18-56-25-W4. Chad is a heavy-duty mechanic and works for Trason Motors in Edmonton and also farms with Ken and Maxine.

Brian was born on May 20, 1984 and works for Finning at the Albion Tar Sands in Fort McMurray.

Kelly was born on May 25, 1986 and is a hair stylist. At the time of writing Kelly is in Guatemala.

Lutz, Wayne & Katherine

By Katherine Lutz

On September 17, 1972 Wayne Lutz was born in St. Albert, Alberta. Wayne is the seventh of nine children born to Joe and Evelyn Lutz. He was raised on his family's mixed farm northwest of Morinville. Wayne attended Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre for kindergarten to grade nine then continued to grade twelve at Sturgeon Composite in Namao. Wayne did not mind school but he had a hard time returning every September when harvest would be taking place at the homestead. He has early memories of riding on various farm equipment with his dad. His mom would pack Joe and Wayne a lunch for the field. The two farmers would not even be out of the lane and young Wayne would have his lunch all eaten up. He would curl up on the floor by Dad's feet to take his first nap of several in the day. Around lunchtime Wayne would look up at his dad with his big blue puppy eyes, as Dad would take a bite of a sandwich. It's a good thing Mom was aware of this so she would pack extra in her husband's lunch. After high school, Wayne knew he wanted to work on the family farm with his dad and two brothers.



Wayne and Katherine Lutz and children, Adele, Caleb, Sophia and baby Silas – 2007

Katherine was born May 4, 1975 in Prince George, B.C. and is the oldest of two children born to Michael Woods and Debbie Green. She was raised in the northern part of B.C., where her dad was a mechanic for a coal mine company. After a back injury, Michael had to change professions and went back to school, moving the family to the lower

mainland where Katherine attended grade seven and finished high school. After high school, Katherine went into retail management and later on automotive warehouse management.

In May 1998, Katherine's sister, who had moved to Edmonton in 1995, got married to Wayne's friend from school. Wayne and Katherine danced and laughed all night and later exchanged addresses and phone numbers. In September of that same year, Katherine packed a suitcase and moved to Edmonton.

Wayne and Katherine were married June 23, 2001. They now have four children, Caleb Joseph, born March 23, 2002, Adele Mary, born September 11, 2003, Sophia Lynn, born August 19, 2005 and Silas Valentine, born June 5, 2007. They live just north of the family farm where Wayne continues to farm with his family. Wayne's kids now enjoy sleeping at his feet and eating his lunch.

Wayne and Katherine also have been blessed to have her grandparents, Jim and Adele Mudge, move from Nanaimo to Alcomdale in September of 2005 in order to be closer to their great-grandchildren.

Manning, Larry and Irene (Brenneis-Byer)

By Irene Manning

I, Irene Manning, was born in the Legal area and went to Diligence School with my three older brothers. We learned to speak, read and write in French. My father, Roy Brenneis, was born in Madison, Nebraska on December 12, 1898. The Brenneis family moved from Nebraska by train to Strathcona, South Edmonton. They crossed the North Saskatchewan River by ferry, then by wagon



Roy Brenneis Family
Back row L to R: Roy and Lucy Brenneis. Front row L to R: Andrew, Clarence, Irene & Leo



Irene and Clarence Brenneis – First Communion

to a farm four miles south of Morinville. They built a brick house in 1918. It is still being lived in today.

My father, Roy Brenneis, married Lucy Iseke whose parents were Frank and Margaret Iseke from St. Albert. Roy and Lucy lived three miles south of Morinville where Leo, Andrew (Andy) and Clarence (Bren) were born. Irene was born in Legal.

In 1943 the family moved to the Riviere Qui Barre area. We went to the Glengarry School in the Ray District. Our dad, Roy, played ball with Riviere Que Barre Seniors. Clarence (Bren) played with the Riviere Qui Barre ball team. Irene played ball with Ray's softball team. We enjoyed sports very much.

Irene married Anthony (Tony) Byer in October 1949 and lived on the Byer farm in the Mearns area for 32 years. Tony passed away on January 31, 1982. After Tony's passing, Irene moved to Morinville and worked at the Morinville Drug Store for 21 years. She married Lawrence (Larry) Manning in 1993.

Presently, Larry and I live in Morinville, where we square dance with the Yellowrock Square Dance Club, floor curl, ice curl and do some traveling. We enjoy our retirement.

Marechal, Pascal

By Denise Lirondelle (Rottot)

Pascal Marechal, born in St. Joseph, Missouri,

on December 30, 1835 was one of the oldest pioneers of the Edmonton district when he died at Mearns in 1931 at the age of 96 years. He arrived to pan gold on the Saskatchewan River near Edmonton in 1868. He was one of the first white men to engage in placer mining along the McLeod and Saskatchewan Rivers in Alberta.

Apart from a trip made to Missouri in 1870-72, he always resided in the Edmonton district once he came to this area. On that journey to his home in Missouri in 1870, four other pioneers accompanied him: Georges Gagnon, Edmond Juneau, Octave Majeau and Lon Harnois.



Denise Rottot, Pascal Marechal, Ida Rottot, Rosalie (Marechal) Rottot – 1929

Upon return from Missouri, they homesteaded on the St. Albert Trail and Pascal's property, SE 34-53-25-W4, was directly across from that of Patrick Kelly. He later sold his property to Pat's brother, Luke Kelly.

In 1872 he married Archange (Eva) Belcourt. She was the widow of Jean Baptiste Short and had four children: Justine, Caroline, Marie and John. Pascal and Archange had a daughter, Rosalie, born in 1878.

Pascal and Archange moved to the Egg Lake area (where Mearns village was established) in 1892 and he became the first postmaster of Egg Lake in 1896. When Archange died in 1908, Pascal moved to Flat Lake (Donatville area) and spent 20 years with his stepson, John Short and his family. He spent his last few years with his daughter Rosalie who was then Mrs. Arthur Rottot.

Though the Marechal name has not continued in this area, there are 23 direct descendant great grandchildren and some great-great grandchildren to carry on the family genes. There are also a number of step-grandchildren and their descendants who will treasure memories of this old pioneer.

Pascal Marechal was a medium-sized individual with blue eyes and a very quiet disposition in his later years. He did not often talk of his early years but sometimes recalled a few of his experiences. He had known Jesse James, the outlaw, but knew him as a much milder man than that pictured by Hollywood in their movies.

Massie, Alfred & Annie

By daughter, Frances Maass

Alfred and Annie Massie moved to the Mearns area from Villeneuve with three young daughters. Evelyn, the eldest was born in Edson and Jean and Clare were born in Villeneuve. The family relocated to a half section of land north of Mearns.

Next the family greeted the arrival of three sons, Robert (Bob), Don and Jack. All three boys were delivered by Mrs. Fred Logan. Annie often recalled Mrs. Logan's visits with much fondness. Mrs. Logan brought wisdom, experience and the ability to inspire confidence in a difficult situation.



The Kluthe sisters were married in a double wedding ceremony at Father Lacombe Church in St. Albert on April 14, 1925. On the left: Alf and Anne Rose Massie. On the right: Paul and Mary Hermanutz

Bob Massie was the first "local" baby to be baptized in the existing Mearns church by Father Stacey. Three more daughters were then born, Thelma, Carolyn and Frances. All three attended the Mearns school.

The grandchildren have often heard the story of their grandfather Alf's special Christmas tradition. Alf would bring Christmas trees from the farm to the Mearns church by "horse drawn sleigh". This event was met with much enthusiasm as he was certain to put bells on the horses for this special occasion. To this day the family still recall how the trees were used to help create the beautiful manger

scene on the church altar. Clearly the most beautiful in the country – or so the kids believed!

Presently, family still reside close to the Mearns area. Alf and Annie Massie are buried in the Mearns cemetery.

Meakin, Syd & Anna

By Anna



Anna and Syd Meakin

Syd was born October 10, 1938, the youngest of our children to Warwick and Gladys Meakin. He attended school at Bamill, then Alcomdale and Camilla. Syd was a member of the Alcomdale 4-H Beef Club, then in later years an assistant leader. When the Busby Gymkhana Club organized, Syd joined as a member, riding his roan gelding named Sandy. Syd farmed at home with his dad, then in 1966 he purchased the home farm, NW 21-56-27-W4 from his dad and mom when they retired and moved to Edmonton.

Anna was born November 28, 1949, the oldest of two girls to Bob and Mary Burns of Pickardville. She attended school in Pickardville to grade six then on to Westlock for grades seven to twelve. The family showed Clydesdale horses in Alberta, Saskatchewan and at the Royal Winter Fair in Toronto, so lots of fun times were spent camping at the Fair Grounds. Learning to ride was a must, so at two years of age Anna would ride one of the Clydesdales, holding on to the hames while chores were being done. At the age of four, Anna's Christmas present was a Shetland pony named Thunder who was tied in the living room by the

Christmas tree. At the age of 12, Anna joined the Echo Hill 4-H Beef Club and also joined the Busby Gymkhana Club.

Syd and Anna were married October 26, 1968 in the Pickardville United Church. This was supposed to have been after harvest, but since it was such a wet year, it was more like the beginning of the fall harvest. No honeymoon was to be, it was back to combining. They continued riding with the Busby Gymkhana Club and Syd played ball with the Busby Fastball Team. In winter he played hockey with the Riviere Qui Barre Relics.

On May 13, 1970 their first child was born, a daughter, Shelley Dee. On January 12, 1972 Randy Dean arrived and on January 6, 1975 Kevin Dale was born. Shelley, Randy and Kevin attended school at Camilla, then Sturgeon Composite High. Randy and Kevin played hockey in RQB and Syd coached for a few years. Shelley took figure skating then, when she was ten, she joined the Double Diamond 4-H Multi Club in the light horse project and later the beef club. Randy and Kevin also joined 4-H in light horse, beef and outdoorsman.

On September 30, 1990 Shelley married Ronald Chamzuk from Grassland. They purchased a mobile home in the Westlock Trailer Court and Ron worked for Norcen Energy. Shelley worked for the TD Bank and later for the town of Westlock. In 1996 they moved to an acreage on Shelley's grandparents farm by Pickardville and started a hay hauling business called The Hay Exchange. Shelley and Ron have six children, Sydney, Kelsey, Makayla, Kristyn, Kiara and Kadin.



The Chamzuk family. Back row L to R: Shelly (Meakin), Ron, Kiara. Front row L to R: Kristyn, Makalya, Kelsey, Sydney, Kadin



Randy and Kathy Meakin and their children Carson and Amanda

In 1994 Randy married Kathy Sloan from Edmonton. They moved a mobile home in the home yard and Randy worked for Case Power and Equipment as a mechanic. In 1995 Randy and Kathy moved to Calgary where Randy worked for Hammer equipment. Missing the country life, they moved to an acreage by High River in 1997. After two years, they returned to the north and purchased a quarter of land from Jim Martin, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ 31-56-27-W4. Randy transferred to Hammer Equipment in Edmonton and Kathy worked for Luscar Mining,



Kevin and Rhonda Meakin

farming in their spare time. They have a herd of beef cows and raise some registered Quarter horses. They have two children, Carson and Amada.

After graduation, Kevin helped at home, then in 1997 bought a tractor/trailer and hauled hay for The Hay Exchange. Then in 1998 he began working for HIS Trucking (Jon & Esther Bucher) hauling grain and is still employed by them. In 1999 Kevin purchased three quarters of land from Stuart Meakin. In 2001 he moved the mobile home from the home yard and set up his own farm. Kevin and Rhonda Esau from Flatbush have a herd of cows and a grain farm as well as working at their off the farm jobs. Rhonda owns Hair Inn Salon in Westlock.

Meakin, Warwick & Gladys

By Anna Meakin

Warwick Stanley Meakin was born February 21, 1900 in Warwickshire, England, the youngest of 13 children. In 1917 Warwick joined the army and was discharged in 1919. He farmed at home until 1929 when he and his brother and sister sold the land. They moved to the United States to join three other brothers and sisters and Warwick came on to Edmonton and started working on a farm in the Millet area.

From there he wrote to an uncle at Lougheed saying that he was in Canada. The uncle wrote back asking Warwick to come and visit him. He stayed with his uncle that summer. They had hoped that Warwick would buy a farm around Lougheed but 1929 was a poor year with no crops, not even a potato. He wrote to Harry Thomson at Dunstable, whose sister had taught school at Warwick's old school in England. After looking at the country



Warwick Meakin Family. L to R: Warwick, Gladys, Joan, Sydney, Stuart, Gordon

around Dunstable, he went to work for the Timneys at Riviere Qui Barre. While there, George Timney showed him several farms, interesting him in a half section two miles south and five miles west of Alcomdale. He liked the look of the land and the district, even though there were only twenty-three acres cleared and broke and hardly a building on it. In June of 1931 he bought the N½ -21-56-27-W4.

Gladys May Bates was born August 9, 1902 on her grandfather's farm in Warwickshire, England. She had one brother five years younger than her. When she was four years old they moved into town, then in 1917 returned to the farm when her grandfather passed away. Gladys received some of her education at Chilvers Coton Church of England School for Girls and then by correspondence. Gladys arrived in Edmonton to join Warwick on October 7, 1931.

Warwick and Gladys were married on October 10, 1931 in Christ Church in Edmonton. Mr. Mitchell brought them out to the farm at Alcomdale the next day. 1931 was the beginning of the depression, so times were hard. Warwick thought of writing and telling the young people back in England how things were in Canada. The depression had started in 1924 in England, so it was about over by this time. Warwick and Gladys thought about returning to England but knew that they could not afford it. It cost a lot more to start farming in England than it did here in those days. They stayed here and weathered the storm along with their neighbours.

On August 8, 1932 their first son, William Gordon, was born, then a year later on August 28, 1933 a daughter, Mary Joan, arrived. On April 14, 1937 another son, Warwick Stuart was born and on October 10, 1938, for their seventh anniversary, along came son number three, Wilfred Sydney.

Gradually they got the land cleared and nearly all broke, and a new house and barns were built. By the late 1950's Warwick's health was not very good but by then the boys were able to do most of the work. In 1967 Warwick and Gladys moved to Edmonton and Sydney bought the farm.

Gordon married Patricia Thompson from Busby. They have five children, Janice, Wayne, Pamela, Wade and Norine.

Joan married Robert Gillard on June 4, 1954. They have four children, Bob, Debby, Donna and Douglas. Robert passed away October 22, 1996.

Stuart married Joan Plumtree, a former Alcomdale schoolteacher and they had one daughter, Heather. Stuart purchased the farm once owned by Konkars, but lived in Morinville, then St. Albert. He worked for Norcen Energy as well. Joan passed away in 1986. In 1994 Stuart married Lucille

Douville. In 1999 Stuart sold the farm and he and Lucille moved to Kelowna, BC.

Sydney married Anna Burns from Pickardville on October 26, 1968. They have three children, Shelley, Randy and Kevin.

Warwick passed away on June 9, 1969 and Gladys on April 17, 1989.



The Meakins' a few years later. From L to R: Gordon, Joan (Gillard), Stuart, Syd

Meinczinger, Matt & Mary (Myer)

By Matt and Mary Meinczinger

On October 15, 1937, Mrs. Theresa Meinczinger along with her three sons; George, 16 years old, Matthew, 13 and John Jr., 9, left Magyar, Bolany, Hungary, a farming community of approximately 900.

We sailed by ship, the Montrose, to join our father in Canada who had been here since March 19, 1930. We arrived in Montreal on October 27, 1930. From there we travelled west by train making an overnight stop in Winnipeg. Not being able to speak English, we had to communicate the best we could by motions and, of course, we relied on our passport to indicate our destination. In Calgary some friends from our hometown met us at the station and took us to their home for supper and to stay overnight. The next day we travelled from Calgary to the Warburg area.

My first impression of the west was all those trees and bush trails, and the log house, which was to be our home. We were ready to turn right around and go back to Hungary where we had left all our school friends. As for Dad, however, it was a 'very happy day' to have his family reunited once again. The family could now work together on his farm.

We had a couple of cows and 10 chickens. We worked hard clearing bush so we could plant more grain. There were many settlers who came to the Warburg area and started homesteading. Times were

hard in those days but in spite of it all we were happy doing things with what we had and went on making a living.

We walked two and a half miles to the Strawberry Ridge School. It was quite an experience to start school, not being able to speak or understand English, but we were not alone. I remember once we had to walk six miles to the local grocery store to buy a can of jam (which cost 37cents) for our school lunches.

Time passed and I decided it was time to go out into the world and make my own living. I worked in Taber hoeing sugar beets in the summer and working on the Canadian Pacific Railroad in the winter.

In November of 1946 I met Mary Myer. We happened to meet at a dance in a hall in Edmonton. Mary was a nursing attendant at the Misericordia Hospital and I was working for the CPR. A year later we both moved to Calgary where I continued to work for the Canadian Pacific Railroad and Mary worked at the General Hospital. Our means of transportation was streetcars and buses.



George and Mary Myer on their wedding day – 1927

We were married in St. Anthony's Parish Church in Busby on June 10, 1948 by Father Merchant. We bought a house in Calgary and continued to live there for three years. Our first daughter, Theresa, was born on June 20, 1949.

In 1951 we decided to buy a farm next to Mom and Dad Myer, near Busby. The farm was located three miles north of the hamlet of Alcomdale and two and a half miles from the hamlet of Busby and belonged to Mr. and Mrs. Leduc. We lived with Mom and Dad Myer for 10 months, as there were no buildings on our farm except for one old granary. On March 31, 1951 our second daughter, Lorraine, was born.

The next six months were busy for us as we were trying to build a small barn. It had a straw roof and sod floor. Then we moved an old two-room farmhouse onto our farm with a couple of tractors. With bush all around us, we chopped trees and placed our buildings where we wanted them. One good thing, we had an artesian well, which is still being used today!

We started farming with six head of cattle, two pigs and 25 chickens. Our barn was partitioned and all of the animals had their places. Winters were cold. The first snowstorm usually came in November. Our method of heating was coal and wood. Lighting was by coal oil lamps and 'Aladdin' mantle lamps. Plumbing was of the outdoor variety. The Eaton's catalogue was an important necessity for any outhouse.

Our little house looked good to us, with a bit of paint on the walls and linoleum on the floor. Apple boxes were nailed to the wall with frilly curtains to make nice looking cupboards for the first while until cupboards could be built. When washing the floor on cold winter days, there were always certain places where the water would freeze to the floor. Pots and pans, which were in the cupboard, were frosty at times when you went to use them.

The production of farm produce for cash income at this time was limited to cream, hogs, cattle and a bit of grain. A few truckers made regular trips to the area to pick up produce and deliver it to market. Our transportation for a few years was a 1939 Chev half-ton. When it rained or snowed a lot, the roads were seldom traveled, as they were nearly impassible.

In the fall when threshing time came, neighbours and friends always helped each other. This made it fun and interesting. The large straw piles from threshing made good shelter for the animals. The pigs were in their glory because they could root holes in the middle. They had to be coaxed to come out at mealtime when it was cold.

On November 9, 1952 our son, Matthew Junior, was born. It was a cold winter with lots of snow.

Entertainment was what you made yourself: house parties, card parties, dancing, community and church picnics, socials and suppers. In later years curling was a highlight.

As years went by, Calgary Power came to the area to install electricity. All the farmers had to cut the bush along the roads so the power lines could be put up. This was completed in the fall of 1958. Electric lights were fantastic! Power – it was unbelievable! Our first electric appliance was a freezer.

Things improved in the years ahead although there were some disappointments in the farming operation. In 1961 we built a new three-bedroom home. Neighbours would lend a helping hand whenever possible. We acquired our own farm equipment and cleared all our farmland, and eventually bought more land. We expanded further into hog production. Conditions kept improving slowly. There was lots of hard work and it kept all of us very busy.

Our children were growing up fast and were helpful in our farming operation. They were now going to school in Westlock, as Busby school only went as far as grade nine.

On August 13, 1966 our youngest daughter, Elaine, was born.

In 1972 we held a joyous occasion, our 25th Wedding Anniversary. A reception was held in the Busby Hall with our family, relatives and friends. We had four children and eight grandchildren.

On June 20, 1970 our daughter Lorraine married Wayne Nickerson. They had a family of two daughters, Heather and Karen, and two sons, Tyler and Eric. They live in the Daysland area and are farming.

On August 4, 1973 our son Matthew married Doris Paquette. They had a daughter, Carmen and a son, Steven. In 1979, Matthew and his wife bought our farm. Matt and I built a new home across the road. Operating as a partnership since then, our primary objectives are a successful beef cattle operation and the production of pedigreed seed grain.

On August 13, 1988 our daughter Elaine married Bradley Jones. They are presently living in Edmonton.

Would we do it again? We have asked ourselves that question many times. Trials and tribulations came and went along with happy days and tiring ones. We feel we have accomplished something worthwhile and fulfilled our expectations. The lifestyle of today is very different and we are enjoying the best part of life, now having celebrated



Matthew and Mary Meinczinger Family – 1988. Back row: Elaine, Theresa, Matthew Jr. and Lorraine. Front row: Mary and Matthew

our 40th Wedding Anniversary with our family and friends in June of 1988.

Matt died on April 28, 1993 as a result of an unsuccessful triple bypass heart operation.

We had some wonderful memories of our 45 years together with our family and made lifelong friends.

I am very proud of my four children and their families and lucky to have them living around me with all the exciting and wonderful experiences that grandchildren and great-grandchildren give.

Intermingled with work I enjoy leisure and am still able to travel as I did this past year, going on a Mexican Riviera cruise with my three daughters. I enjoy going back to the farm where our son and his family continue to progress as the years go by.

I have been living in a senior's complex in Edmonton since the year 2000 where I'm enjoying my retirement days.

God's greatest gift to us is the memories we hold so dear.

Meinczinger, Matthew Jr. (Matt) & Doris

By Matt Meinczinger

I, Matt, graduated from Westlock High School and spent two years at NAIT in Instrumentation Technology. My years at NAIT were very memorable, full of fun and heavy-duty studying. My classmates were a great group.

Nearing graduation in May 1972 I accepted a job with Imperial Oil Ltd. at the Redwater Gas Plant.

On August 4, 1973 I married Doris Paquette, daughter of Simone and Louis Paquette of

Pickardville. We lived in an apartment in Westlock and I drove to Redwater. Doris began teaching grade one at Westlock Elementary School that September. She had just completed three years at the University of Alberta. She took night classes and summer school for the next four years and received her B.Ed. on November 20, 1976.

In the summer of 1974 we moved to the farm, two miles east and three quarters of a mile south of Busby where we went into partnership with Dad and Mom, Matt and Mary Meinczinger. A 68-foot trailer was installed north of the spruce trees in the former garden plot. It took a couple of years to clean out the bush and plant grass around it. We liked our new home.

In the spring of 1975 I stopped working at Redwater to become a full-time partner in the farming operation. We were beginning to increase our beef cattle operation and to rent more land.

On June 19, 1977 our daughter, Carmen Michelle, arrived. Doris took a year leave of absence from teaching in Westlock. This leave was shortened when she accepted a half-time teaching position at Busby School. She continued teaching half time at Busby for nine years.

On December 7, 1979 our son, Steven Matthew, was born. Carmen is presently taking music and vocal lessons and Steven loves sports, hockey in the winter and ball and soccer in the summer.

In December of 1981 we sold the trailer and moved into Mom and Dad's house after they built a new house across the road.

I joined the Busby Lion's Club in 1981 and became the Busby Fire Chief for the new Fire Department in 1986. Doris changed to teaching full-time in December of 1986 and is presently teaching Grade one in Busby school. We continue to operate our farm as a partnership with an emphasis on beef cattle and the production of pedigreed seed grain.

Some of my favourite memories:

- Going to school in Busby and building forts in the bush north of the playground
- An old workhorse named Jimmy that my Grandfather Myer gave my sisters, Terry and Lee and me.
- The straw stacks made by the threshing machines. Our pigs made holes in them big enough for us to play in.
- A tree house I built at home that was at the 30-foot level. Each board was raised using a rope.
- My Grandfather, George Myer, sitting in the shade under a large maple tree by the summer kitchen.
- Going to Sandy Beach with my mom and dad and sisters.
- Living in a two-room house and having a three-legged dog named Rex and a rabbit named Wendy.

- Spending summers hunting and building forts with my friends, Keith and Ken Mitchell, Neil Busenius and Laurier Byer
- In my early grades we had to walk three quarters of a mile north to catch the bus because our road wasn't graveled. Now it is a very busy secondary highway #794.
- I enjoyed our family shopping trips to Edmonton. Dad and I always went to a movie while Mom and the girls shopped. My favourite movie was "Old Yeller".
- It was a log way to Warburg where my Grandparents, John and Theresa Meinczinger, lived but at Christmas I looked forward to seeing all my relatives at my Grandparent's farm.
- I remember a barn dance that my mom's uncle, Mike Holzer had. It lasted until the next day but I didn't! Mike and Johanna Holzer lived six miles east and three quarters of a mile north of Busby.

Meyer, John & Elizabeth

Submitted by Lawrence Kluthe

John (Johannes) Meyer was the fifth child of nine born to Johannes Meyer and Gertrude Kluthe. John was born June 10, 1896 in Paderborn, Westphalia, a province in northwest Germany.

Drafted into the German Army in 1915 at the age of 18 he served in the regiment, which was bodyguard to the German Kaiser Wilhelm the Second. After the war he worked in the coalmines in the Rhur Valley.

In the fall of 1923 John boarded the 'Empress of Scotland' and sailed to Canada. This ship was forced off course by the British fleet and ran aground so John spent a month near Southampton while the ship was being repaired. He landed in Quebec City and then took the train to Edmonton. He immigrated to Canada at the suggestion of his Uncle Joe Kluthe of St. Albert who told him of the untold opportunities in Alberta. His uncle paid the \$150 required for the fare and John worked on the farm and in the coalmines in Drumheller to pay back the fare to his uncle.

He was also saving money to buy his own land and in 1928, five years after immigrating to Canada, he purchased 160 acres of farmland, the SE¼ of 2-57-26-W4th, one mile north of the Egg Lake School for the then substantial price of \$6,000 mortgaged at six per cent interest. He bought the farm because the soil was good. Life looked promising at the time. Wheat was selling for \$1.50 a bushel and his first crop was good.

Then in 1929, the depression of the thirties took hold and made it very difficult to make payments

and survive. John worked on the road crews, and a lumber camp at Shoal Creek where he froze his feet. He went back to work in the coalmines, but only for a short time. Not for him!

In 1936 John married his neighbour and sweetheart, Elizabeth Tolle, from Nordborchen, Germany and the sister of his brother-in-law, Fred Tolle at the Franciscan Chapel in Edmonton. Elizabeth immigrated to Canada in November 1935. She was a professional chef and worked for Mrs. Winters, the proprietor of the largest brewery in Germany at the time, in Koln (Cologne), Germany.

After their marriage, they farmed together on the land John had purchased in 1928 near Mearns. Elizabeth died in 1940 and John never remarried. They didn't have any children.

John raised pigs and milked cows and sold the cream. He paid his land off by learning to shear sheep. English farmers from as far away as Gibbons and Namao, had flocks as large as 800 sheep. Using manual shears and cutting very close to the skin, Meyer could produce the highest grade of wool and earn \$20 a day. When he was shearing, Meyer would walk to the job, if it was less than 10 miles away.



Elizabeth (Tolle) Meyer – circa 1935

He continued farming the same land until retiring and moving into Heritage Lodge in Morinville in 1979. He was its first resident! Due to declining health, John moved to the newly completed Aspen House in Morinville in the spring of 1999. He passed away at Aspen House on November 15,



Front row, L to R: Mrs Harman, Gertrude Tolle, Elizabeth Meyer, John Meyer, Fred Tolle, Henry Schier. Back row: Elizabeth Tolle, Frankie Brandle, Fritz Tolle, Eric Schuller

1999 at the age of 103. He is buried alongside his wife in the Mearns cemetery.

The one thing most people would remember about John was if he was in a crowd and you couldn't see him, you would surely hear him either singing or talking above everyone else in the crowd. John was always in a good mood and most everyone really enjoyed his company. He would always make a yearly visit to our house and usually he would still be busy talking the next morning when us kids woke up.

John is best remembered for his love of walking and his involvement in all Lodge activities. He had many friends in the lodge. John Meyer will always be remembered by those who knew him as a good friend and a great neighbour.



John Meyer on his 103rd birthday – June 10, 1999



John Meyer – circa 1940

Middleton, Ward & Joanne (Lutz)

By Ward & Joanne

Ward was born on October 9, 1967 and Joanne was born on July 19, 1968.

We were both raised in the surrounding area and attended Sturgeon schools for grades one to 12. Ward went on to train as a welder/millwright and Joanne as a Family Studies major.



Ward and Joanne Middleton with children Josie and Ian

We were married on June 29, 1991. We lived in the Slave Lake area for the first five years before purchasing the Middleton farm, four and a half miles north of Morinville. We now live on an acreage that originally housed the Riopel School.

We had two children: Ian, born on October 25, 1995 and Josie, born on December 25, 1999. Ian and Josie attend schools in Bon Accord.

We farm about 500 acres organically with rotations of grain, herbs and forage. Ward is also employed as an operator for Terasen pipelines.

As a family, we enjoy cycling, hiking, canoeing and cross-country skiing.

Mollenkopf, Paul and Emma

By daughter, Margaret McFarlane

Paul Mollenkopf arrived in Canada from Germany in 1923. Emma Mollenkopf arrived in Canada in 1924. They met and married in Hines Creek, Alberta.

The entire Mollenkopf family moved to Alcomdale in 1942, where they had purchased 160 acres a half a mile south of Alcomdale.

Paul bought one ticket for himself and one ticket for a rail car. He stowed his entire family plus their meager belongings and farm animals into the rail car for their journey to Alcomdale, arriving none the worse for wear. What an experience!

Paul and Emma's farm was not very productive so Paul would work on pipelines and other projects to bring in some extra money.

Three of their children were born in Hines Creek. Their children were Frieda, Walter, Margaret



Mollenkopf Family – Walter, Emma, Hedy, Margaret and Paul

and Hedy. Freida is the beloved half-sister born to Emma in Poland and did not attend Alcomdale School.

Freida is married to Carl Madsen and they have five children, seven grandchildren and one great grandchild. Frieda and Carl are retired and reside in Kelowna, B.C.

Walter married Marlene Kicia in 1965 and they have two sons, Lyle and Dale and one grandson, Tyson. They are both retired and reside in Edmonton, Alberta.

Margaret married Howard McFarlane in 1966 and they have one daughter, Tracy and one grandson, Dylan. They are also retired and live in Edmonton.

Hedy married Bill Erkamp in 1956 and they have five children: Robert, Cindy (now deceased), Martin, Dave and Jacalyn. They have six grandchildren. They are retired and reside in Sherwood Park, Alberta.

Paul and Emma bought their first car in 1946. That was such a treat. They could actually drive to church in a short time rather than almost two hours by horses and wagon, as their church was in Sion, Alberta.

Walter, Margaret and Hedy went to country dances whenever they could afford the 25 cents or 50 cents needed to get in. Gaby Haas and other local bands played great western music.



1999 – Walter Mollenkopf and wife Marlene, Frieda Madsen (sister to Walter, Margaret and Hedy), Margaret McFarlane (nee Mollenkopf) and husband Howard



Hedy Erkamp (nee Mollenkopf) and husband Bill



Bill and Hedy (Mollenkopf) Erkamp and Family: Hedy, Robert, Martin, Jackie, Cindy, Bill and Dave

School was a wonderful experience, as I think most country schools are. Our teachers were very nice, especially Pauline Klapuschuk and her sister who lived in a small, neat teacherage on the school grounds. Mr. Murray and Mr. Morris were also so nice and helpful, as were 99 per cent of the teachers. We were very fortunate. We played softball and volleyball and towards the end of our school years we played ping-pong. Hedy and Ivy Libke sure could whip Mr. Shewchuk.

After school, our friends and cousins would come over and we would play hide-and-seek between big piles of hay or straw until dark. Great fun!

We picked raspberries, strawberries, saskatoons and blueberries for wonderful pies and canned fruit. One day while picking blueberries, Walter saw a bear. We ran all the way home, spilling all our hard-picked berries. We returned to the scene of the crime the next day to discover our supposed bear was just a big old burned log.

Many such experiences contributed to our fond memories of Alcomdale School and community activities, and the wonderful people we came to know and love.

Moore, George Family

Reprinted from *"Decades of the Independence Area"* (1981)

George Moore homesteaded in the Alcomdale district before there was a town. He came in 1904 to the NE 8-57-26-W4. He improved upon it in 1907 and then moved to Edmonton for a time. He moved back to the farm in 1913. He bought the adjoining quarter from a family by the name of Boeker, from Texas. There they built the house that was known as Moore's Hotel in 1913. It was moved one mile west to the main road and moved into Alcomdale when the railway siding was put in there, presumably 1920.

There were three boys in the Moore family. Allan died during the flu epidemic in 1918.

Geordie married Valda Calloway from Busby. They lived in Alcomdale where Geordie was a blacksmith, then moved to a farm west, NW 31-56-27-W4. Some years later, Geordie, Valda and five sons, Allan, Clarence, Roy, Royce and Glenn moved to British Columbia. Presently they are living in Prince George.

Jeff married Cecille Criss of Bon Accord in 1929 and lived on the farm owned by George Sim. While here, they attended Independence Church and son Billie went to Bamill School. In 1935 they moved into Alcomdale to Moore's Hotel. Mr. and

Mrs. Moore Sr. moved into a smaller house in the town. Jeff and Cecille raised five children: Billie, Shirley, Mildred, Ada and Joyce. In 1947 they moved to Edmonton, later to Gibbons. Jeff passed away in 1974 and Cecille in 1973.

Mrs. Moore died in 1943 and George Moore died in 1945.

Moreland, Ralph & Lovisa (Stitsen)

By Lovisa Moreland

I am the youngest daughter of Claire and Tony Stitsen. Some memories of St. Charles Church that I can remember are the times I eagerly ran up to sit next to my grandparents, Laura and Robert Kieser, during Mass on the 'odd' Sunday we were there. I enjoyed being able to run upstairs to the choir loft and ring the bell as people were leaving the church.

When our home parish of St. Anthony's in Busby closed, we were then part of Mearns. I took part by becoming a reader, helping with the music ministry and taking turns teaching Sunday school. In the summer of 2005, my husband and I were fortunate to be married in Mearns; a beautiful memory because my grandparents, parents, and my brother and his wife were married there as well. It is always a blessing to return to Mearns, as the sharing in the Mass will always be a special part of my history.



Photo taken on Ralph and Lovisa (Stitsen) Moreland's wedding day, July 2, 2005 at St. Charles Church in Mearns

Morrison, Alec & Anna (Bramhoffer)

By Angus Morrison

My mother, Anna Matilda Dorteia Marie was the second child born to Hulda & Balthouser Bramhoffer. She was born at Egg Lake, Alberta in 1904. They lived in the original log house on the Bramhoffer homestead. I don't know how long the family lived there, but I think that most of the Bramhoffer family was raised in that log house. They probably lived there till about 1909. From there the family moved to Edmonton and lived in the area at the foot of the low level bridge called the 'Flats'. I recall my mother telling me her dad worked at manufacturing bricks and her mother ran a boarding and lodging house.

My mother's dad died when she was seven years old. She also lost her older brother a few months after her dad died. Seems like after the father's death the family moved to a district near Morinville called Ray. I do not know how long they stayed there but it seems from what I can piece together they moved quite a lot, back and forth from Edmonton, to Ray, to Morinville.

My mother, now being the oldest child, had many responsibilities and had to work very hard. Times were no doubt tough and everyone had to pull their own weight.

In 1912 her mother remarried Nick Wulff. Anna continued to live with her mother and stepfather till approximately 1920. She then married Christian Lutz.

Her husband died in the first year of their marriage and my mother was a widow at 18 years of age. She stayed on at the Lutz farm and eventually moved to Morinville where she was employed as a maid and housekeeper for the Billo and Velandre families.

She then went to work at the Steffes farm as a cook and housekeeper and this is where she met my dad, Alec Morrison. Her sisters, Gertie, Theresa and Mary accompanied her, as it was not fitting for a widow to be alone with single men.

My mother married Alec Morrison on December 1, 1925. They remained at the Steffes farm until 1927 when they moved to their own farm at Mearns, Alberta.

In September 1926 she

gave birth to her first child, Margaret. There were complications and the child died a few days after birth.

A second child, Robert, was born May 1928. A third child, Angus, was born July 1930 and a fourth child, Kathleen, was born October 1935.

We remained on the farm until November 1948. All three children attended school at Belle Valley until 1948. My dad, due to his health, left the farm and purchased a dray and livery barn business in St. Walburg, Saskatchewan. We moved there in January of 1949. They operated this business for four years. My dad semi retired and bought a house there. Dad worked for Poole Construction and also at the Liquor Board store in St. Walburg.

Anna and Alec spent a great deal of their time beautifying the yard and growing a very large garden. They both enjoyed fishing and spent many hours passing their time that way.

They also enjoyed their grandchildren and having their children home for weekends and holidays. Robert, Angus and Kathleen all married local people. This certainly helped to keep the family together.

Anna held a knack for being able to make a meal out of practically nothing. And there was always lots of everything on her table. "The more the merrier." Those words echo in my ears now as I heard her say it so often.

No one was ever turned away from their door. Anna and Alec were always there to lend a helping hand wherever needed. Anna could take a hand-me-down dress, re-cut it, add a little lace and voila! A new dress! Her deep freeze was full to the brim with home made everything. Shelves were lined with preserves. She loved her hobbies; sewing novelties, liquid and regular embroidery, making pillows, crocheting edgings. She spent many hours sewing for Church bazaars. She made aprons and many other sewing articles and sold them and bought more material and made more aprons and other things and sold them and bought the gravy pitchers for the Church hall. This was her special project.

Dad passed away September 1965. Anna remained at her house and took in boarders on the advice of her doctor, as she needed a reason to continue on.

Anna had trouble with her nerves and had several bouts with illness over the years. In 1974 she sold her home and moved into Lakeland Lodge in St. Walburg. It was a very hard move for her, giving up her home. She learned to enjoy the Lodge very much and, without the responsibility of maintaining a home, her health, nerve-wise, improved.

She suffered a stroke in 1979, which took away

her speech and her ability to walk on her own. Two years later she had a second stroke, which paralyzed her one side and after two months she died on August 31, 1981.

Alec and Anna had three children, nine grandchildren and there are 18 great-grandchildren to date.

- Robert and his wife, Mary. Robert passed away in 1992. They have four children: Ken, MaryAnn, John and Gordon. MaryAnn passed away November 1986.
- Angus and his wife, Madeline. Madeline passed away in April 2005. They have three children: Alex, Gary and Glen.
- Kathleen and her husband, Jim. Jim passed away in November 1988 and Kathleen passed away in 2002. They have two children, Allen and Thea.



Alex and Ann Morrison – 25th Anniversary



Madeline May Morrison



Kathleen Kendel-Taylor

Mudge, Jim & Adele

By Jim & Adele

Jim and Adele Mudge moved from Nanaimo, B.C. in the fall of 2005. They came here to be close to their granddaughter, Katherine, and her husband, Wayne Lutz and their growing family.

In February 2006, they purchased the home of Jim and Alice Falls in Alcomdale.

Jim is retired from working 37 years for



Jim and Adele Mudge – 2007

McMillan Bloedel Forestry Division. His work took him all over Vancouver Island and the Queen Charlotte Islands.

Adele worked in the Nanaimo hospital.

Muller, Maurice & Gertrude (Brenhofer)

By daughter, Eileen Pelletier

Maurice Gabriel Muller was the youngest son of George and Emelia Muller. George came to Canada from Austria and Emelia from Poland. They arrived in the area before 1890.

Maurice married Gertrude Brenhofer, daughter of Walter and Hulda Brenhofer who were also homesteaders in the area. Maurice and Gertrude farmed approximately three and a half miles east and one and a half miles south of Mearns. They raised a family of six, four girls and two boys. Shortly after they were married, and before they had any family, their house burned to the ground and everything was lost. It took many years of hard work to regain what they had lost, but a new house was eventually built.

Maurice and Gertrude farmed the land for some 40 years before Maurice passed away and Gertrude then sold the land to Paul Stanley who, to my knowledge, still owns most of the quarter other than the farmyard, which was developed into a small acreage.

The two oldest children, Margaret and Lorraine, attended Tellier School. Raymond and Eileen started school at Tellier but were then sent to Egg Lake School until St. Charles School at Mearns was



Maurice & Gertrude Muller

ready. Dorothy and Allen went to Mearns as well and then later Eileen, Dorothy and Allen went to Camilla School at Riviere Qui Barre where they finished their schooling. It was great going to Mearns and Camilla as we were bussed and didn't have to walk so far. Eventually we were even picked up at our gate.

Margaret, the oldest child, married Lionel Houle. They have two boys who both married, seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Lorraine married Arthur Baker and they have five children, four boys and one girl. They have nine grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Raymond married Norma Perreault and they have two boys and one girl. They have four grandchildren. They made their home in Whitecourt, Alberta.

Eileen married Roger Pelletier. They have two boys and raised two foster boys. They enjoy eight grandchildren. They live in Gibbons, Alberta.

Dorothy married Sherman Rouncville. They have three boys, all married, and two grandchildren. They make their home near Athabasca.

Allen never married.

We were all quite sports minded, Dorothy and



Maurice Muller, pitcher



Gertrude Muller, up to bat

Eileen bringing home many ribbons from track and field. Our family enjoyed fishing and swimming, playing ball and hockey. Maurice and Gertrude also played on ball teams.

Maurice passed away in 1971 and Gertrude in 1994. Allen passed away in 1966 and Margaret passed away June 2002.

Myer, George & Mary

By daughter, Mary Meinczinger

George Myer was born on February 1, 1898 in Hammerleich, Austria. He served in the army in

World War I for a number of years. He also spent many months in concentration camps. When the war was over he met Mary Holzer and they were married in January of 1927.

In May of 1927 George and Mary immigrated to Canada from Austria by ship, which took seven days. There were rumors on the ship that money was plentiful on the prairies and homesteads could be leased from the government for \$1,000, so they decided that this was where they were going, western Canada. They were going to work, save their money, and then later on they would return to Austria. Little did they realize that this was but a dream.

They answered an ad in a newspaper where a farmer wanted a married couple to help on his farm. As they grew up in a farming community, they were partially experienced. They moved to Leipzig, Sask., where they lived in a granary that they renovated enough to make livable. With very little money and no knowledge of English their struggle began.

My dad picked stones all day for 50 cents and later did whatever the farmer required of him in his farming operation. He worked from sunrise until sundown with no raise in pay. As money was scarce, my mom walked a couple of miles each day to the village to clean rooming houses.

On October 4, 1928, I, Mary, their first daughter was born. That winter they moved into a one-bedroom apartment in Edmonton. The following spring, farmers were advertising for farm help, so we moved again to a farm near Morinville. At last, our own little home on this farm felt warm. They worked very hard for two years. By then they had saved a bit of money and decided to rent a farm. We moved onto a quarter of land between Alcomdale and Mearns. Our farmland was mainly bush with very little land cleared on which to produce grain. It had a small house built of slabs and a log barn. Our house had one room with an attic, which contained our beds made of straw. Our parents nailed blue building paper on the walls. The cupboards were made of apple boxes.

Farmers in general, were living off the land; homegrown vegetables and wild berries were always plentiful. We grew our own supply of meat on the farm. We operated the farm with whatever we had.

Transportation was by horse and wagon, or sleigh. Neighbours and friends always helped each other, which made life enjoyable and interesting. There were no roads, just trails. We lived one mile from Mearns and walked to church on Sunday whenever possible. We lived beside a railroad track

so we walked along the tracks whenever we could, as it was shorter. We also lived one mile from Alcomdale, so we were lucky. We didn't have far to walk for groceries.

Within the next four years my two sisters were born, Erna and Lily. Needless to say we struggled to make a living. There were so many things to learn. I remember in the fall before it got too cold, my dad would walk along the railroad track to Edmonton to buy us shoes, fabric and other necessities. He would bring as much winter supplies as he could carry. Mother made all our clothes.

My uncle, Mike Holzer (my mother's brother), decided he would immigrate to Canada and come to live with us. We were so happy! Now we had a big brother. Mother, however, found the loneliness overwhelming. If there had been enough money saved to go back to Austria, she would have gone back.

Dad and Uncle Mike farmed together for the next few years. We added an extra room to our little house, using rough slabs, as there was no planed lumber. As the years went by more land was cleared by hand so more acres could be seeded. Cutting the bush was a winter project and the rest was done as time permitted.

I started school when I was seven years old. I couldn't speak English and understood very little. I walked along the railroad tracks to Alcomdale, which was a little hamlet of about 50 people. The one room school was quite large for those times. We had 50 pupils from grades one to eight. Mr. Carver was my teacher. He lived one mile east and one and a half miles south of Busby, and came to school every day by horse and buggy.

A few years later my two sisters were also walking to school with me. By now they had learned a bit of English. Now Dad rode by train to Edmonton to buy what we needed. In those days the passenger train would go early in the morning and return in the evening. The English language was now getting easier for us. We were involved in community and church events.

We had now been renting for ten years. In the spring of 1940, Dad had enough money saved for a down payment on a farm, which we bought from Mr. and Mrs. Ray Hepburn. It was two and a half miles north of Alcomdale. The farm was nice compared to what we had. It had a house built from real lumber, a barn and other buildings for the animals. We only had 160 acres, 50 of which were bush, but it was OUR OWN!

Uncle Mike now started renting his own farm four miles north of Alcomdale. This land belonged to Mr. and Mrs. Landis. They were getting too old to

continue farming so my uncle lived with them and did all the work. My dad and uncle divided all the animals so they each would have enough to start again.

We felt as though we were moving into the middle of nowhere. We moved the cattle by chasing them on the road with the horses. The machinery also had to be moved.

People who lived along the road had to maintain it, cut the brush and put in culverts. The road going past our farm is now Hwy #794.

We now belonged to a new school district called Spring View, three miles east of Busby. It was a one-room school with a big coal and wood heater in the middle. There were about 30 pupils. Mr. Morris was our teacher and taught grades one to eight. We went to school by horse and cart, which my dad built for us. I was in the fifth grade, Erna in grade three and Lillian in grade two. It was hard for us to start a new school but eventually we got used to it.

My mother's ability to grow bountiful gardens, together with her capable hands, made the most of what we had and kept the family well fed and clothed. We milked a few cows, which kept us in dairy products. We had an old shallow well that filled with snow and ice in the winter. When spring came we would lower our dairy products in containers down the well so they would stay fresh and raise them up by means of a rope.

Planting small patches of grain wasn't unusual. Fields were of various sizes. In the fall, threshing the sheaves of grain was a community effort. Those were times when the whole neighbourhood worked together until everyone was done. Then threshing get-togethers were held. At that time you could exchange your wheat for bags of flour.

In the summer there were always picnics somewhere, and once or twice a year during the summer months someone with a large truck would take a number of families to Lac La Nonne. We would all eat our lunches together. The big dairies from Edmonton, advertising their ice cream, would give everyone a Dixie cup and ice cream cone for free! Extras were five cents a cone.

After school and on weekends, we always had to herd our cattle alongside the road to make sure they would get enough grass.

Time passed and improvements were being made every year. There were times during the year when Indians with covered wagons passed by to attend the pilgrimage at Lac St. Anne. Sometimes they would stop overnight and camp at our place. At first we were scared but after a while we got used to them. Radios and gramophones were other means of entertainment.

Mom and Dad finally bought their first car, a 1941 Ford. One morning in the summer of 1942, Dad had a heart attack. The next year was hard because we girls did most of the farming, working with the horses in the fields and doing the best we could. Luckily, Dad eventually got better, but wasn't able to work as hard as he used to. His first tractor was a 1946 Massey Harris.

I went to Busby School and then took grades 10 and 11 by correspondence. Mrs. Hunter was our teacher. She taught grades 7 to 11. After I completed my schooling I left home and began working as a ward aide with the Misericordia Hospital.

My youngest sister Lily was still at home. Mom and Dad continued farming and bought more land, the quarter section attached to their land, which belonged to Mr. and Mrs. McCoomb.

In April of 1952 my mother died suddenly at the age of 49 from a severe stroke. Her dream of ever going back home to Austria never became a reality. Dad later sold the farm and together with Matt and I, he bought a house in Edmonton. It was there that he enjoyed his retirement until his death in February of 1978.

I, Mary, married Mathew (Matt) Meinczinger of Busby and we had three daughters, Theresa, Lorraine and Elaine, and one son, Mathew Jr.

Erna married Anthony Eliuk of Kimberley, B.C. They have one daughter, Marianne, who died in 1977 and one son, Anthony Jr. Erna passed away in 1987.

Lillian married Ladislav Eliuk. They have three daughters, Theresa, Maureen and Judy, and one son, Ladislav Jr., who died in 1972.

Neilson, Rose (Banack)

By Rose Neilson

Our family moved to Mearns when I was seven and entering the second grade. My brother, Tom, was four years old and Wayne was just three months. We lived in town just across from the elevators because Dad bought grain for the UGG. Our house was small but cozy. We lived there for a few years until everyone was getting too big and we just needed a larger place. Our new house had a basement, running water and three bedrooms – it seemed like a palace.

There was never a lack of things to do in Mearns because there was a large number of children who lived right there. And, you could be best friends with one person one week and another person the next. We spent more time outside playing than inside. Kick the can, softball and red light, were a few of the games we enjoyed. How many children play

school in the back of a school bus teaching the younger ones what they had just learned that year? And what about going to the dump! That was the highlight of the summer. In the winter we dug tunnels in the deep snow in the ditches and skated a lot. And all this fun with a ball, a bat, a bike and some skates! And when we wanted something different to do, we would walk down the tracks to Alcomdale and pick the tiger lilies along the way. What imaginations we had to be able to stay busy with so few toys. We were the first family in town to get a TV – black and white with a test pattern. Wow, that was technology!

I was rather intimidated by going to a school that was taught by Nuns. They seemed rather strict and they could tell who was misbehaving even with their backs turned. It was the best schooling any child could get. Lots of lessons learned. One of the Nuns had to be away one day so another student (can't remember who) and I were to teach her class of grades one, two and three. I didn't want to be a teacher after that. And how unfair was it that, every Friday, the girls had choir practice and the boys had a free period of playing outside?

In winter there was always a race during lunchtime to see who could get their skates on and outside first. Of course the girls tried to tattle on the boys and vice versa saying they were cheating by putting on their skates under the table. The first ones would decide what everyone would do – skate or play hockey.

We would often visit the Nuns at the convent. They played a mean game of crokinole and hide and seek, with them hiding us under their long aprons. I still liked the marching bands and all the singing. Everywhere we went we would sing. I wanted to be a Nun when I grew up. Then, in grade ten, I went to school in Riviere Qui Barre and that changed everything.

Our community was like a large family and we stood together when times were good and when times were bad. It seemed though that the good times always outnumbered the bad. Who can forget the church picnics, ball games and the famous chicken suppers with all those pies!

It was a sad day when Mom and Dad had to pull up their roots and move to another community. We are all married now with children of our own but will never forget our time spent in Mearns.

Nickerson, Wayne & Lorraine (Lee)

By Lee Nickerson (Meinczinger)

I, Lorraine (Lee) graduated from Westlock High School in 1969. After completing one year at NAIT,

I began working for the Provincial Government. In 1971 I married Wayne Nickerson of Strome.

We both worked for the Provincial Government. I worked until 1974 when our first daughter, Heather, was born. Wayne worked until the spring of 1975.

That year we decided to return to Strome and help Wayne's father on the farm. In 1976 our first son, Tyler, was born. That winter Wayne started working in Camrose for an accounting firm where he is still employed during the income tax season.

In 1979, Wayne's parents, Norman and Ruth, retired to Daysland and Wayne and I took over the farm.

Our second son, Eric, was born in 1980, followed in 1985 by the birth of a daughter, Karen.

Nobert Brothers, Georges & Alphonse

By Guy, Lorraine, Jocelyn & Gisèle

Georges Nobert, with his younger brother Alphonse, farmed the homestead quarter C.P.R. SW 13-56-27-W4th purchased by their father, Walter T. Nobert, in 1899. The Nobert brothers were the youngest in the Nobert family and prematurely took over the running of the family homestead following the untimely death of their father at only 57 in 1937. Over the years, Georges and Alphonse succeeded in bringing the family farm into a financially viable business.

In 1946, Georges married Gertrude Dupuis. They lived in the main house for a few years until Gertrude's father, Henri Dupuis, built a new home for them across the yard from the main house. Georges and Gertrude had two children, Lorraine and Guy, and were active in the St. Charles parish and Mearns community until 1974 when the farm was sold to the Soetaert family.

Georges was involved and interested in politics, especially in matters related to faith and education. He assisted in the organizing of the first Catholic school in the Mearns district, St. Charles School, in 1948. He was also active in the St. Charles church choir for several years. As a child, I can remember Dad's clear bass voice during Christmas Midnight Mass and the Easter liturgical services. While Guy and Lorraine were both away at boarding school,

Gertrude became involved with the St. Charles CWL and other parish activities as well as teaching oral French at St. Charles School.

Our family's fondest memories of St. Charles were those during Father Gregory's years in



Alphonse & Georges Nobert, eligible bachelors holidaying – 1944



Nobert Homestead – 1955



The Engaged Couple – 1945. Alphonse Nobert, Maurice Nobert, Georges Nobert & Gertrude Dupuis, Grand-mère Urbanie Nobert

Mearns. Many were his family visits, enjoying meals, laughter and the company of his parishioners. The girls in the church choir and the altar boys were often surprised by a special Christmas treat. I especially remember and cherish a three-dimensional paper crèche received one Christmas.

In 1947, Alphonse married Jeannette Dupuis, Gertrude's younger sister. Alphonse and Jeannette resided in the main house. With frequent visits to the homes of her married daughters in the Morinville area, Grand'mère Urbanie (Soetaert) Nobert resided in the family home until her passing away in 1951. Jeannette and Alphonse continued to live on the original homestead, where they raised five children, until 1969. In 1969 they built their dream home in Morinville where they lived until Jeannette's sudden death in 1993. Some years later, once Alphonse's health started to fail, he moved to the Youville Extended Care Facility in St. Albert where he passed away June 13, 2006.

Alphonse worked with the municipal government of Sturgeon since the mid 50's, first as a councillor, then as secretary-treasurer while he continued to farm with Georges. He was instrumental in the building of the original



Alphonse & Jeanette's Wedding – 1947. Flower Girl – Louise Dupuis, Bridesmaid – Gertrude Tellier, Bestman – Leo Dupuis. Back row: Clara & Henri Dupuis, Urbanie Nobert, Frank Nobert

municipal office in Morinville to ease access for local taxpayers. I vividly remember the pride he had when the building was first opened in the 60's. Up until he retired from work, he was also involved with selling real estate locally with Bermont Realty.

Sharing the farm homestead was special for both the families of Georges and Alphonse. The children always had playmates at hand and a second home with their favorite aunt and uncle. Many were the childhood adventures and fond memories until both families moved away from the Mearns area.

Having sold the farm in 1974, Georges and Gertrude purchased a holiday trailer and traveled as snowbirds to the southern United States for the next five years. During the summer, they would camp on their son's property in St. Albert. In 1979, Georges and Gertrude decided to permanently reside in St. Albert, enjoying the proximity of their children and grandchildren until their passing away. Gertrude passed away in 2002, with Georges joining her in 2004.

Lorraine is married to Guy Hébert and currently lives in St. Albert. They have three sons: Colin, married and living in Brighton, Michigan; Marc,

living and studying in Montréal and Pierre, living and working in St. Albert.

Guy is married to Yvette Hébert and currently lives on an acreage near St. Albert. They have four children: Andrée Nobert-Bennett, married and living in St. Albert; Marcel, married and living in Saskatoon; Corinne Mulder, married and living in Edmonton and Danielle, presently studying in Charlottetown, P.E.I.

Jeannette and Alphonse spent many loving years together as a young couple on the farm, raising five children and then moving to Morinville. Always active with local endeavors – the chicken suppers in the Mearns church basement and the construction of the Rendez-Vous Centre in Morinville come to mind. Traveling by motor home or by car, they visited both B.C. and all of Alberta, truly enjoying themselves as grandparents. Many evenings were spent reliving the stories of their adventures while playing cards with family and friends.

Jocelyne, the eldest, married to Al Wahlstrom, currently lives in Whiterock, B.C. They have three children, who are attending university, Byron the eldest, Kirsten and Leanne.

Gisèle was married to Dennis Himschoot. She now resides in Grande Prairie with her two children, Jill and Daniel, who are pursuing post secondary education in Grande Prairie.

Laurier is married to Claire Benoit and they are living in Rocky Mountain House with their two children, Nathalie and Jean Marc.

Marc, recently married to Karen Watson, is living in Calgary.

Monique is married to Bernard Cyr and is living in Montreal.

We had a blessed childhood on the farm – those memories bring us to tears of joy and laughter.



Georges & Gertrude Nobert's 50th Anniversary – 1996. Seated: Georges & Gertrude Nobert; Standing: Pierre Hébert, Guy & Lorraine Hébert, Guy & Yvette Nobert, Andrée Nobert-Bennett, Russell Bennett, Danielle Nobert, Marc Hébert



Alphonse and Jeannette Nobert – 1992



Alphonse & Jeanette Nobert's children at Marc's wedding – 2004. L to R: Gisele, Jocelyne, Marc, Monique, Laurier

Nobert Family History

By Leonard Nobert and Janet (Nobert) Macdonald



Frank and Obeline (née Comeau) Nobert with children Josephine and Walter

The Noberts came to Canada, then known as New France, from Normandie, France in the late 1600's. A marriage between Etienne Nobert and Dorothee Dubois was recorded in 1691 at Batiscan, Quebec. To this day descendants of this original couple live on the ancestral farm at Batiscan.

The Mearns branch of the Noberts had a circuitous route before arriving in Northern Alberta. During the early eighteen sixties the American Civil War was on and there was a demand in the U.S. for men and horses, consequently many people from Quebec saw an opportunity to make some income and acquire some land. Hubert Nobert, along with his wife Rose (nee Frigon) and their children left Quebec and headed for Kansas.

Their fifteen year old son, great grandfather Frank Nobert, found employment with the Union army driving mules pulling canons from one battlefield to the next as Kansas was both Union and Confederate. After the war Frank had two quarters of deeded farmland near St. Joseph, Cloud County, Kansas. In 1877 he married nineteen-year old Obeline Comeau, twelve years his junior and his best friend Moise Comeau's younger sister. In 1880 a son, Walter (Telesphore) was born.

During the late 1880's early 1890's Kansas was

struck by drought and many of the original Quebec families, Breault, Cyr, Comeau, etc. left Kansas for the promised land of Riviere Qui Barre in the Northwest Territories, Canada. Frank Nobert decided to move his family south to Oklahoma where the land rush was on for Indian territory. Frank settled near Fort Lexington at Purcel, Oklahoma. Here also, by the late 1890's, drought, economic depression and lawlessness became a problem.

In 1898, at about age 18, son Walter decided he'd had enough of drought and rattlesnakes (even years later, in Northern Alberta Walter never felt safe reaching into a hen's nest to pick eggs without first checking with a match or a light for a snake). Walter left Oklahoma by bicycle and headed 1900 miles North to join his uncles: Onesime, Moise, Edouard, Ludger, and Louis Comeau (also spelled Como), as well as his aunt Clarice (married to Remi Breault). He no doubt stopped at St. Joseph Kansas to see his uncle Alfred Nobert and his grandparents, Joseph and Flora Comeau.

From there he kept going North, through Nebraska and the Dakotas into Winnipeg and from there by train to Edmonton and then by foot and wagon to his uncle Edouard Comeau's farm four miles south west of Mearns. On June 12, 1900 Walter T. Nobert purchased a homestead just south



Wedding picture of Walter Nobert and Urbanie Soetaert – January 19, 1904.

of his uncle's place (SE/SW 13-56-27-W4). Walter lived and worked with his uncle Edouard, sawing lumber and breaking land until his house was built. Walter's father, Frank Nobert, came up from Oklahoma and took a homestead one mile east of Walter (NE 7-56-26-W4). Over the winter Frank and Walter, with the help of the Comeaus, built a log cabin on a bluff along the east side of the creek on the CPR land that Frank had purchased.

Walter married Urbanie Soetaert, daughter of August Soetaert and Rosalia De Dobbelaere, on January 19, 1904 in St. Emerence Church, Riviere Qui Barre. His mother, Obeline, must have come from Oklahoma for her son's wedding as her signature appears on the marriage certificate as witness. It was during this time, January 11, 1904 to be exact, that the deed to their land, originally purchased in June of 1900, was officially assigned to Frank Nobert.

Frank Nobert returned to Oklahoma to sell his property and return to the Mearns area with his family but unfortunately misfortune struck. The proceeds from the sale of his land were all lost in a bank robbery and Frank and a daughter Alice died of flu complications November 26, 1907. Obeline packed up her infant daughter, Clarice, and moved



Walter Nobert with his sister Clarice and his mother Obeline (Comeau) Nobert – circa 1925

to Alberta to join her five brothers and her son, Walter, and to keep the homestead her husband had purchased back in June of 1900. Obeline was a true pioneer woman who could shoot a shotgun or rifle with the best, and have a prairie chicken or rabbit in the pot in a jiffy. Obeline lived with Walter and his wife, Urbanie, until Clarice was 14 years old then moved into a house Walter built for her in Riviere Qui Barre. There she ran a boarding house for coal miners.



Boarding house owned by Obeline (Comeau) Nobert – Riviere Qui Barre – circa 1919



Walter Nobert family and farm (CPR SW 13-56-27-W4) circa 1912. Walter purchased this homestead in 1899. It is presently owned by Walter & Urbanie Nobert's great nephew, Phil Soetaert

In 1912, Obeline's brother, Edouard Comeau died accidentally from internal injuries, the result of a knee to the abdomen during a wrestling match with a cousin at the Shamrock Hotel in Riviere Qui Barre, leaving his widow with 11 children. The youngest boy Alphonse Comeau died recently in February of 2007 at the age 96. Walter eventually bought their farm, NW/NE 13-56-27-W4.

Walter and Urbanie settled on their homestead in the Mearns area where they raised eight children: Marie, Frank, Emile, Louise, Frederic, Emma, Georges, and Alphonse. Walter and Urbanie worked very hard running the farm and a small sawmill at Sandy Lake. He cut all his own lumber for the buildings on his farm and helped build the church in Riviere Qui Barre. In 1930 Walter, Frank, Emile and Fred provided volunteer time and materials to build the church in Mearns. Walter (Telesphore) Nobert was also active in politics and served as a Councillor for the Municipal District of Ray #549 from 1919 until his death in 1937. It is interesting to note that his son Alphonse was a Councillor for the Municipal District of Sturgeon #90 from 1955 to 1962 and Secretary Treasurer from 1962 to 1981. Combined, Walter and Alphonse Nobert represented this district for a total of 44 years – a remarkable accomplishment!

Walter Nobert died of cancer July 7, 1937 at the age of 57 and, according to Alice (Turgeon) Nobert's diary, Fred was left to run the farm with the help of his two younger brothers, Georges and Alphonse, who were only 16 and 13 years old at the time. Urbanie continued to live on the farm until a



Walter and Urbanie Nobert and family – circa 1937



Fred, Frank, George and Alphonse Nobert – circa 1938

fire destroyed her home in 1943. She had to escape the flames by climbing out of a window to safety. The house was rebuilt but she did not live in it for very long. Her two youngest sons, Georges and

Alphonse, took over the family farm and Urbanie made her home with her married daughters, moving from one place to the other until her death in December of 1951.

The oldest daughter, Marie, born on November 4, 1904, married Robert Tellier in 1924 and they raised twelve children: Clara, Marcel, Lucien, Gertrude, Rachel, Roger, Leon, Denise, Rolande, Paul, Mariette, and George. Marie passed away March 18, 1991, predeceased by her husband Robert on March 20, 1984.



Wedding picture of Robert Tellier and Marie Nobert – June 12, 1924

The oldest son Frank, born in 1906, married his first wife, Exilda Meunier, in 1928. They bought the Moise (Moses) Breault farm on the SW 19-56-26-W4. (Moise helped build the St. Emerence Church.) Frank and Exilda had two sons, Lionel and Maurice. Lionel died of pneumonia around the age of two and Exilda died from complications arising from a gallstone attack in 1932. In 1934 Frank married Alice LaRocque and sold his quarter section of land to his mother Urbanie in order to purchase a butcher shop and relocate in Picardville. They had five

children: Viviane, Normand, Roland, Walter, and Dale. Frank and Alice later moved to Edmonton where Frank worked as a school custodian for many years. Frank passed away November 26, 1986, followed by Alice on February 24, 2001.

Emile, born March 27, 1907, married Elizabeth Turgeon (sister of Alice Nobert) in 1933. They ran the Mearns General Store from 1934 to 1945 before selling it to a Mr. Sagan who in turn sold the store to Dan and Catherine Sheehan around 1947. Emile and Elizabeth Nobert moved to Vancouver Island. They had three children: Angeline, Roger and Emile Jr. Emile passed away September 14, 1994 followed by Elizabeth's death on March 1, 1997.

Louise, born January 26, 1910, married Eugene Pelletier in 1936. They had four children: Therese, Emile, Marcel and Angeline. They made their home near Legal then moved to Morinville where Eugene ran a car dealership, Ford Pelletier Sales, with his two sons. Louise passed way August 30, 1967. Eugene passed away on December 27, 2004.

Fred, born July 11, 1913, married Alice Turgeon, daughter of Louis and H len Turgeon of Morinville, on November 7, 1939 at St. Jean Baptiste Church in Morinville and made their home on a farm near Mearns. They had six children: Richard, Leonard, Lucille, Claire, Janet and Gloria. They remained on the farm until 1996 when they moved to Heritage Lodge in Morinville and turned the farm over to their two sons. Fred died in March of 1996 and Alice followed two years later in May of 1998. Both are buried in the Mearns cemetery.

Emma, born March 11, 1916, married Elie Bergevin in 1942. They lived on a farm near Legal for many years then moved to St. Albert. They had eight children: Raymond, Claudette, Lionel, Denis, Sylvia, Marie, Georges, and Francine. Emma passed away June 8, 1980 and Elie, June 7, 1992.

Georges, born October 30, 1920, married Gertrude Dupuis in 1946. Georges and Gertrude had two children, Lorraine and Guy, who both live in St. Albert. Georges was active on the Mearns school board, parish, and choir. Gertrude taught school in Mearns. Georges died July 26, 2004 and was predeceased by his wife Gertrude on September 24, 2002.

Alphonse, born September 8, 1923, married Jeannette Dupuis (Gertrude's sister) in 1947. They had five children: Jocelyne, Gis le, Laurier, Marc, and Monique. Alphonse and Jeannette moved to Morinville in 1969 where Alphonse served as Secretary Treasurer for the Municipal District of Sturgeon #90 until his retirement. Jeannette died suddenly July 24, 1993. Alphonse later moved to the Youville Home in St. Albert and remained there until his death on June 13, 2006. He was the

youngest and last surviving member of Walter and Urbanie's children.



Wedding picture of Frank Nobert and Exilda Meunier – 1928



Wedding picture of Emile Nobert and Elizabeth Turgeon – 1933



Wedding picture of Frank Nobert and Alice LaRocque – 1934



Wedding picture of Eugene Pelletier and Louise Nobert – Nov. 1936



Wedding picture of Frederic Nobert and Alice Turgeon – November 7, 1939.



Wedding picture of Elie Bergevin and Emma Nobert – January 20, 1942.



Wedding picture of George Nobert and Gertrude Dupuis – August 8, 1946.



Elie & Emma Bergevin Family on the occasion of their 25th Wedding Anniversary, Jan. 20, 1942. L to R: Georges, Dennis, Lionel, Raymond, Elie & Emma, Claudette, Sylvia, Marie & Francine



Wedding picture of Alphonse Nobert and Jeannette Dupuis – 1947.

Nobert, Emile & Elizabeth

By Angeline Brick (Nobert)

My name is Angeline (Nobert) Brick and I lived the first ten years of my life in Mearns. My parents, Emile and Elizabeth Nobert, started the general store here in about 1934. There were three of us children, myself, Roger and Emile Jr. At that time there were five houses, two grain elevators and a church. My uncle, Doyle Cochlin, (Aunt Ida and cousin Margo) ran the UGG elevator and Mr. Ike Houle (his wife was Alice) operated the other one.

I remember hearing mention of the names of



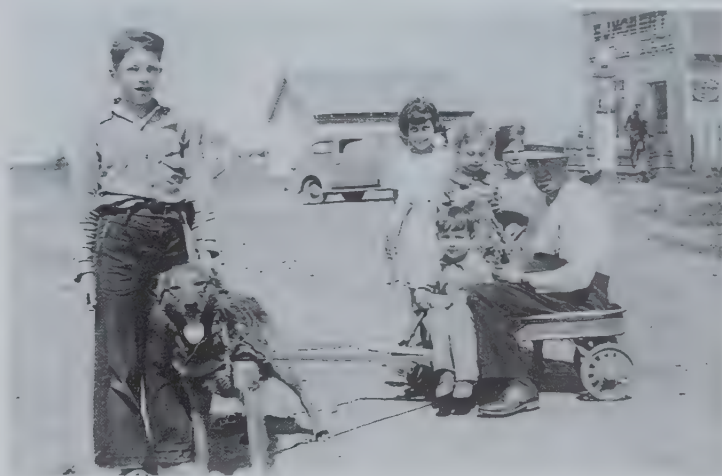
L to R: Margo Cochlin on sleigh, Roger Nobert, Angeline Nobert – circa 1939/1940

priests Father Stacy and Father Faye, but the one I remember well was Father Raymond Merchant. My brother and I spent many hours with him. He would tie his handkerchief around my head and boost me up to the altar to dust and clean.

There were only a few houses in Mearns, but everyone went all out for us kids at Halloween. We had to sing and dance at every house before we could get our treats. These were always special homemade goodies.

The church was the hub of all social activities. They used to have great chicken suppers, ball games and box lunch socials. In those days we went to school in Alcomdale. The first couple of years my parents and my aunt and uncle drove us there. Later, we went by horse and buggy or on horseback with the Ricard kids, who were a few years older and braver than we were.

Christmas time was always special. We walked to midnight mass in the snow and then got to open our gifts; that is, if Santa had been there during the time we were in church. The store was open before mass and lots of people did their shopping at that time. Whether Santa came that night, or not until the next morning, seemed to depend on how late the customers stayed.



L to R: Lucien Turgeon (Uncle) with dog, Therese Ricard, Angeline Nobert, Margo Cochlin. Sitting: Roger Nobert and Father Faye. Emile Nobert in background by the store.

My grandparents, aunts and uncles came over after mass for a piece of 'tourtiere' and gifts. They were Walter and Urbanie Nobert and their children, Mary, Frank, Emile, Frederic (Fred), Louise, Emma, Georges and Alphonse.

My parents sold the store in 1944 and we moved to Morinville for two years. After that, we moved to Vancouver Island, B.C. where my brother Emile and I still live. My brother Roger moved to Calgary and still lives there with his family. My father passed away in 1994 and my mother in 1997. I shall always have great memories of Mearns.



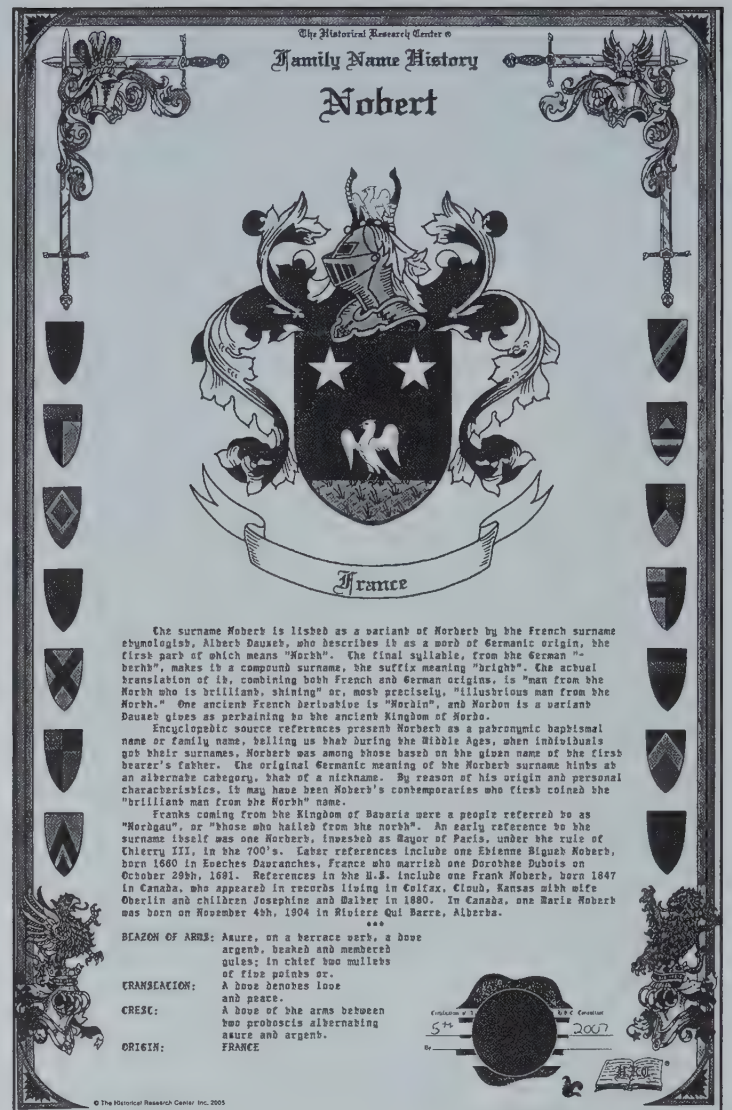
"Ice Fishing" (all Mearns residents) Back: Fred Nobert, Marguerite Soetaert, Alphonse Nobert, Alice Nobert, Art Soetaert. Seated: Maurice Bugnet & Georges Nobert.



L to R: Elizabeth Nobert, Angeline Nobert, Jeannette Morin (cousin), Agnes Kennedy (housekeeper for Fr. Merchant)



Roger, Elizabeth (nee Turgeon), Emile and Angeline Nobert – circa 1941



Nobert Family Crest

Nobert, Frank & Alice family

By son Maurice Nobert

Frank Nobert was the second child from a family of nine children. His parents were Telesphore (Walter) Nobert and Urbanie (nee Soetaert).

Frank, in his early years, attended the Belle Valley School, which was not far from the farm. For high school, he attended the Notre Dame Convent in Morinville, which provided room and board during the week. After he finished his schooling, he worked with his father on the farm. Later he bought a farm one mile north (SW 19-56-26-W4), which was his parents' farm.

In 1928, Frank married Ezilda Meunier and settled on his farm to raise a family. The wedding was a double wedding in Morinville. Frank married Ezilda Meunier, and his brother Emile married Elizabeth Turgeon. Frank and Ezilda's first child lived only for six months. His name was Lionel, born October 23, 1929. The second child, myself, Maurice, was born October 17, 1930 and lived to write this story. Frank lost his wife, Ezilda, June 21,

1932 to kidney failure at the age of 24, leaving me motherless at the age of two. I was looked after by Frank Parent until Dad remarried his first wife's cousin, Alice Larocque, on February 12, 1934 in Morinville, Alberta.

With his second marriage, Frank and Alice raised one girl and three boys. After Frank's father Telesphore (Walter) passed away in 1937, Frank decided to sell his land to his brother Fred Nobert and moved to the town of Picardville to start a butcher shop. In 1939 he sold his shop and moved to a small farm east of Picardville to a place called Vimy, Alberta, 40 miles north of Edmonton, and lived there until 1950.

Frank and Alice's daughter, Vivian, was born in Picardville in 1939, Norman was born in 1940 and Roland in 1944. All were raised at the farm in Vimy. Maurice, Vivian and Norman all went to school in Vimy. In 1950 Frank and Alice sold the farm and moved to Edmonton, where brother Walter was born in 1951. During 1939 to 1950 our parents had a hard time to make a good living. Our mother had a hard life and father also had to work out. He worked on the Alaska Highway, driving trucks for the army during the building of the Alaska Highway. He also worked on the Namao airport, helping in building the airport during those years in Edmonton. In 1953, we moved to the Peace River country and went farming south of Falher, Alberta. During the time in Falher, we opened our land across the Smoky River in the White Mud district near Grandfather Joe Larocque's land. We later moved to Roma, northwest of Peace River and farmed there. The children, Vivian, Roland, Walter and Norman had schooling in Falher and Peace River. In 1957, the family moved back to Edmonton and bought a home

in West Jasper Place. The children finished their education in Edmonton. The last child, a boy named Dale, was born in 1959. Frank and Alice went to work for the Catholic schools. Frank was operated on for cancer and lived for 28 more years. He died in 1986. Their son Walter died in 1992. Alice lived in Edmonton until 2001 when she died of cancer. Both are laid to rest at the Holy Cross Cemetery in Edmonton, Alberta.

Tracing the life and time of the Nobert history from 1621 to 2004...

From Normandy to Canada, settled in Quebec, then U.S.A., then Alberta, in 1898.

At St-Genevieve de Batiscan, Quebec in 1845, a wedding took place with Hubert Nobert and Rose Frigon. Some time later the family moved to St. Joseph, Kansas, USA, with two sons and three daughters. One of the sons became our great-grandfather Francois (Frank) Nobert who married Obeline Comeau in November 1877. The young lady was nineteen years old. The wedding took place at St. Joseph, Cloud County, Kansas, in the United States. Their first child was a daughter, Eugenie (Josephine), born in 1878. She married a Mr. Malo and died giving birth to their first child in 1896. She was about 18 years old.

Frank and Obeline's, second child, Telesphore (Walter) Nobert, our grandfather, was born in 1880. When Walter was ten years old, the family moved to Purcell, Oklahoma, USA where two other daughters were born, Alice in 1894 and Clarice in 1905. According to church records, Alice died as a child.

Walter Nobert, at the age of 18, traveled to Alberta, Canada in 1898 to visit his uncle Edward (Edouard) Comeau, a brother to his mother, Obeline, and worked with his uncle clearing the land that Edward had. Walter took some land and opened some of it with his uncle. He also built a cabin on it with the help of his father, Frank Nobert, in 1900. Some years later, Walter bought his Uncle Edward's land.

In November of 1907, Frank passed away in Kansas, USA. Walter brought his mother and his sister, Clarice, to Alberta, Canada to live with him on the land. Walter supported his mother and his sister for many years with a good home in Riviere Qui Barre until his mother passed away. His sister, Clarice, married Wilfred Beaupré and raised a family of three boys and one girl. Clarice lived to the age of 93 and passed away in 2002.

Walter married Urbanie Soetaert in Morinville, in St. Jean Baptist Catholic Church, in 1904. Urbanie was born in 1883 in Belgium. She was the daughter of August Soetaert and Rosalia De Dobbelaere. Urbanie had three brothers, Cyril,



Frank and Alice Nobert family photo taken 1974. L to R standing: Dale, Maurice, Roland, Viviane, Walter, Normand. Sitting: Frank and Alice

Remi and Jules, and two sisters, Marie (Mrs. Joe Behiels) and Elizabeth (Mrs. Emile Lema).

Walter and Urbanie raised a family of nine children, five boys and four girls: Marie (Mary), Frank, Emile, Louise, Frederic (Fred), Emma, Bernadette, Georges and Alphonse. Walter died in July 1937 at the age 57 and his wife, Urbanie died November 23, 1951 at the age of 68. Both are buried in the Mearns cemetery.

Nobert, Fred & Alice (Turgeon) Family

By the children

Fred and Alice were married November 7, 1939 at St. Jean Baptiste Church in Morinville. Fred bought a quarter section of land from Mr. Justin Douziech (originally the Joe Comeau place) and another quarter section of land from his mother, Urbanie. This was the quarter of land formerly owned by Fred's brother Frank.



Fred and Alice Nobert circa 1993

Urbanie sold the land to Fred for \$1,000.00 and arranged to have him move off the home place in order that Georges, who was in military training in Wainwright at the time, would have to come home to look after his widowed mother, ultimately sparing him from going to war. Fred and Alice lived with Urbanie until their own house was fixed up and ready to move into. This house had originally been built by Moise Breault around 1901 and occupied by Fred's brother, Frank, until Frank moved to Picardville in 1934. In 1950, Fred and Alice moved this same house across the field to its present location where their youngest daughter, Gloria, was

born. They had six children: Richard, Leonard, Lucille, Claire, Janet and Gloria.

Both Fred and Alice were active in the community, participating in the annual picnics, curling, church suppers, and playing cards with their many friends. Fred helped as a volunteer to build the Mearns church and was a member of the Knights of Columbus, always ready to lend a helping hand. He loved to play baseball and served as an umpire for almost a decade. It was well known that Fred, in his younger years, loved a weekly poker game with his buddies Eddy Brenneis, Steve Polakovits, Paul Hermanutz, Art Soetaert, Maurice Bugnet, and Hugh Kennedy.

Alice was a dedicated member of the Mearns Catholic Women's League for over forty years, as well as a member of the church choir. She treasured every moment spent in song and friendship. One of her greatest losses after suffering a stroke in her mid-seventies was her inability to continue singing in the choir with her friends Louise & Oliver Brenneis, Dan Brenneis, Theresa Ricard, Maurice Logan, Yvonne Kluthe, Emma Schafers, Phyllis Borle, Irene Byers and others. She was a hard worker and for many years raised chickens and established an "egg route" to help bring in extra money.



Fred and Alice Nobert's 40th Anniversary, Nov. 1979. Back Row (L to R): Gloria, Leonard, Fred, Richard. Front Row: Janet, Lucille, Alice, Claire

Fred and Alice remained on the farm until 1996 when they moved to Heritage Lodge in Morinville, turning the farm over to their two sons.

Fred died in March of 1996 at the age of 82 and Alice followed two years later in May of 1998 at the age of 80. Both are buried in the Mearns cemetery next to Walter and Urbanie Nobert and Frank's first wife, Exilda, and infant son, Lionel.

Richard George Nobert

I, Richard, eldest child of Fred and Alice Nobert, was born in the spring of 1941. Those were

the war years. I remember how roaring formations of planes would fly over my father's farm during WW2. Edmonton was a training center for RCAF pilots. By the fall of 1947, I had to go to school. My father didn't have a horse. He had a Model A Ford and a tractor instead. It was great for him, but not for me. Having neither a horse nor a bicycle to get to the Belle Valley School three miles away, I was forced to go to the Morinville Convent where I spent one of the most awful years of my life.

By the fall of 1948, the two-room Belle Valley School had been moved to Mearns, where I began grade two. It was quite a change. To get to school during grade two, I had to walk a mile across my father's half-section of land to catch the bus on what is now Highway 44. I walked that field through grain and rain, and mud and snow. I'd have gladly walked through hell to avoid being in the awful Morinville Convent ever again. However, during the summer of 1949, my father decided to move our house and entire farm-site east, next to Highway 44 where it still sits today. Due to this, my five siblings never had to suffer the experiences of my first two years of schooling.



1949 – The Fred Nobert house, originally owned by Moise Breault, being moved across the field to where it still sits today

Our bus driver was Mr. Dan Sheehan, a wonderful man, and a fantastic driver over roads not fit for a Jeep. When it rained, he had to fight his way through deep ruts of gumbo and muck since the roads had no gravel. In the winter, the roads were hell once more. All he had was a custom-built bus (with wooden benches) on a one-ton Dodge truck chassis with only single wheels. Many men today with four-wheel-drive trucks would hit the ditch on roads that Dan had to drive as part of his route. Dan's bus was one of the very first to be used in the Sturgeon district. His route basically went west up to Highway 44; then south up to Highway 642; then east up to the corner of Range Road 260 where Edward Krywko now lives; and then back north to Mearns, with various zigs and zags all along the route.

Dan Sheehan also owned the Mearns General Store that formerly belonged to my Uncle Emile Nobert and then to Joe Sagan. I am now 65, but when I was a small boy, that little store looked big to me. The 'Lord's Day Act' at the time did not permit stores to be open on Sunday, however, that little store was open for a few hours each Sunday after mass. It was packed with people all getting their groceries, tobacco, cigarettes, gas, plus the local 'baloney' too. They were even allowed to run up a tab. The little place was crowded and full of cigarette smoke, as men were smoking and talking in the back then; so people actually shopped in Mearns.

By 1952 the 'baby-boom' was starting to have its effect on the Mearns School. More kids meant that more school buildings had to be moved in. They were quickly set up without concrete foundations; big wooden blocks were used instead. After the two-room Belle Valley School, came the one-room Labbe School. It was covered with imitation brick siding. Then came the one-room Riopel School followed by the lovely one-room Spring-Hill School with its white stucco siding. The Spring Hill School was destroyed by fire after being in use only a few weeks during the fall of what was to be my seventh year in school. Was it 1954? Anyhow, that building was quickly replaced by what we called 'the chicken coop' because of its size and looks. I've been told that it came from the Egg Lake area. I studied grade seven in that 'coop'.

Our teacher was Mr. Emile L'Hereaux, who lived with his wife in a little shack for a teacherage.



Richard and Liza Nobert

The place had no plumbing or electricity and was barely bigger than 20 by 12 feet in size. At that time, none of our school buildings had any plumbing. What we had to use were smelly outhouses. The Belle Valley building had a basement in which there were two smelly 'inhouses'.

The Mearns Rural Electrification Co-op, for Calgary Power, started to come into existence in 1953. Only the few people with private d.c. power generators had electricity, therefore the various Mearns school-buildings had no electricity for the first few years. We didn't have 'running-water'. We had 'walking-water'. We had to walk to and from a well outside that had a handle-operated pump. It was no fun getting a drink of water in wintertime.

Because the Mearns School was very close to the Northern Alberta Railroad and its Mearns sidings, we kids could easily see and hear the trains going by. It was awesome to see the big steam locomotives going by. Every once in a while, Mr. Ricard's pigs would get loose and get too close to the train. So to scare them away, the locomotive engineers would let out a blast of steam from the bottom side of the locomotive. The pigs would squeal and then run like hell. The steam whistles of those locomotives were awesome. Then one day we heard a strange sound. It was a horn from the first of many diesel locomotives. An era had come to an end.

I left Mearns after grade seven to become a student at St. John's College, which is now part of the University of Alberta. I became a very good student. I went from failing a grade in Mearns to skipping a grade at St. John's where I spent two years before returning to spend my last three years at Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre. There I managed to get my high-school diploma. After graduating, I worked mostly as a legal and road-engineering surveyor before going for higher wages, working as a Journeyman Electrician and Electrical Maintenance Technician until my retirement in 2003.

I never married until I was 30. My years as a surveyor kept me going from town to town all over Alberta. By the time I'd get to know a girl, the project was over and I'd have to move on to try and find another job in some other place. After I quit working as a surveyor, I did get married. It was a disaster! I should have kept on surveying! Within a year I was divorced. That experience kept me single till the age of 40 when I met my friend Liza on a blind date arranged by my general foreman from the Syncrude project. By this time I had changed careers and was working as an electrician. Liza became my soul mate. We bravely got married in

1980. With deep respect and care for each other, we made our marriage both a joy and a success. Shortly after we got married, we moved to the farm-site and house that once belonged to Mr. Rene Bourbonnais. The former Belle Valley School site is just down the lane. We lived in this location close to 25 years and up until September 2007 when we moved to Morinville, I was the only original Nobert still living in the area where three Nobert generations once lived.

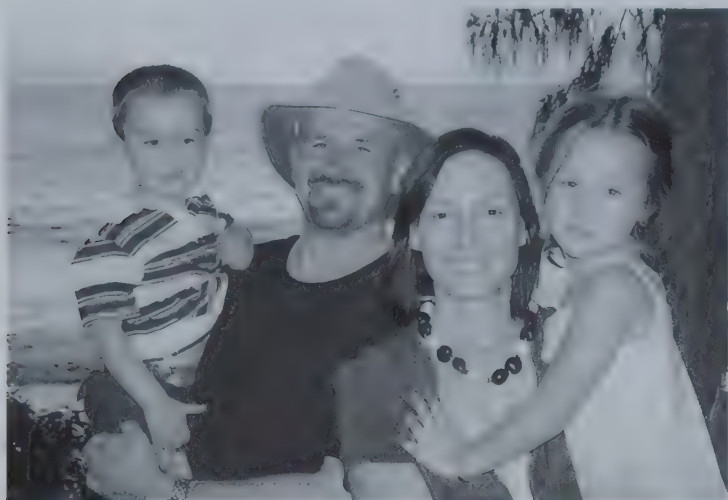
Leonard Doyle Nobert

Leonard, second oldest of Fred and Alice's family, was born in Morinville, Alberta on July 25, 1943 and attended grade school in Mearns. He graduated from Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre in 1961 and graduated with a DDS (Doctor of Dental Surgery) degree from the University of Alberta in 1967. It was in Fort Vermillion during the summer of 1966 that he met his future wife, Dr. Ewa Melech. During that summer, Leonard was the dentist and Ewa was the medical doctor. Ewa was born in Poland and graduated in Medicine from the University of Western Ontario in London, Ontario. They were married in 1969 and have two sons, Andre and Rocque, both of whom practice dentistry with their father at their Hillside Dental Building in St. Albert. Andre studied at both the University of



Leonard and Ewa Nobert with sons Andre and Rocque – circa 1977

Alberta and the University of Manitoba where he received his DMD (Doctor of Medical Dentistry) degree in 1996. Rocque received his DMD degree from the University of Alberta in 1997.



Dr. Andre Nobert with wife Brooke (Barr) and children Seth and Faith



Dr. Rocque Nobert with wife Rochelle (Loewen)

Ewa worked for many years at the Aberhart and University Hospitals in Edmonton, specializing with patients suffering from tuberculosis and other respiratory ailments. She retired in 2004 but continues to offer her medical expertise where needed.

Leonard, in addition to his private practice, was Dental Health Officer with the Sturgeon Health Unit in St. Albert from 1970 to 1990 and has worked as Dental Consultant with the Sturgeon General Hospital since 1970. As a distraction from his dental practice, Leonard raises livestock and continues to run the family farm at Mearns. He is a member of both the Canadian and Alberta Salers Cattle Association.

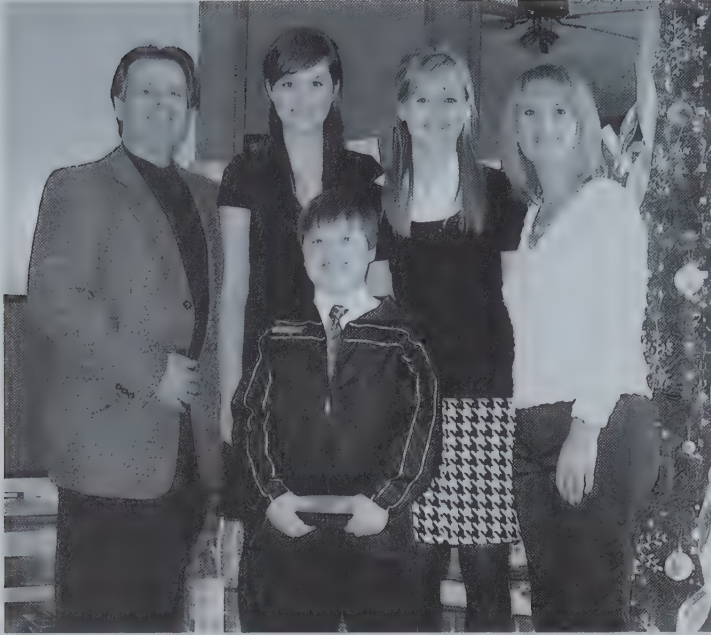
Lucille Elizabeth (Nobert) Heemeryck

Lucille, eldest daughter of Fred and Alice, was born October 5th, 1944. She attended elementary and junior high school at St. Charles School in

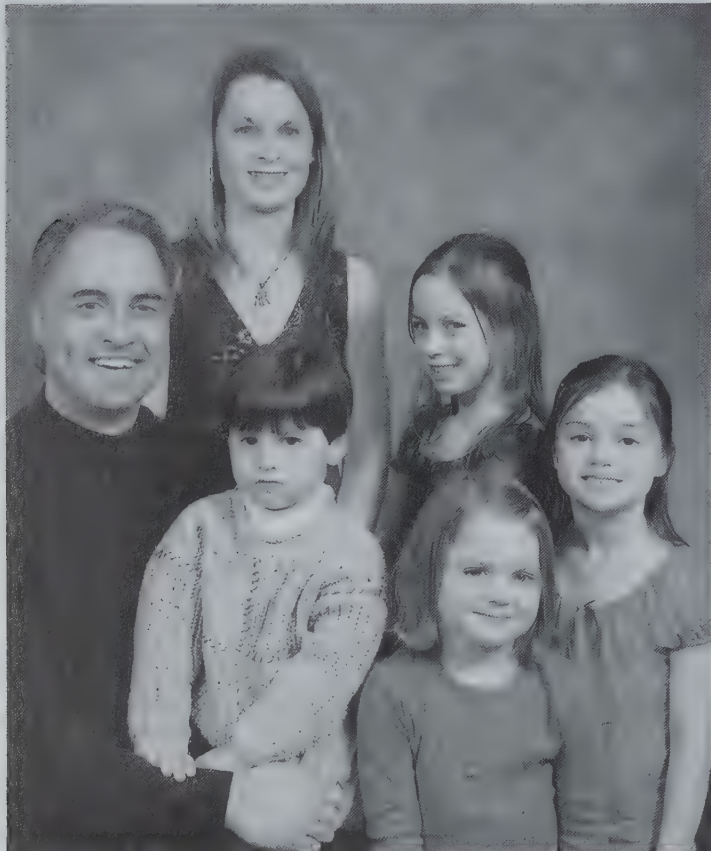


Ted and Lucille (Nobert) Heemeryck – November 9, 1963

Mearns, Alberta and went on to graduate from Camilla High School in Riviere Qui Barre, Alberta in 1962. Following graduation, Lucille moved to Edmonton, Alberta to pursue a career in Secretarial Arts, later expanding to Administrative Management. On November 9th, 1963, Lucille married Ted Heemeryck, son of George and Sarah Heemeryck of Busby, Alberta, at St. Charles Church in Mearns. They made their home in Edmonton. During their ten-year marriage, Lucille and Ted were blessed with two beautiful daughters, Corinne and Shelley. Corinne, their eldest daughter, graduated from Archbishop O'Leary High in Edmonton and went on to obtain her diploma in Radiology Technology from the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology. Corinne is married to Neil Johnson, son of Charles and Marlene Johnson of Edmonton and resides in Sherwood Park, Alberta. Corinne and Neil have three children, daughters Ashley, Jenna and son Matthew. Shelley, their youngest daughter, also a graduate from Archbishop O'Leary High, obtained her diploma in Business Administration from the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology and went on to obtain a degree in Recreation Administration from the University of Alberta. Shelley is married to Warren Klotz, son of Frank and Hazel Klotz of Edmonton and resides in St. Albert, Alberta. Shelley and Warren have four children, daughters Hannah, Rebecca, Holly and son Brett.



The Johnson Family, Neil, Ashley, Jenna and Corinne, with Matthew in the front – Dec. 2007.



Warren and Shelley (Heemeryck) Klotz and children Hannah, Rebecca, Holly and Brett, 2006

Lucille worked for the Edmonton General / Grey Nuns Hospital and the Grey Nuns of Alberta for a combined period of 29 years. She retired in September of 2006. Lucille continues to live in Edmonton in close proximity to her family and grandchildren, whom she refers to as “the light of her life”.

“Reminiscing on my years back home in Mearns, I have fond memories of a close knit

community where school and church were the center of family activity and entertainment. How I enjoyed the parish picnics in the summer, playing ball on the Mearns softball team, the big yellow school bus that brought us to school every day, the chicken suppers in the fall, the annual school Christmas concerts, midnight Mass on Christmas Eve, and Sundays, yes Sundays, when we got to dress in our finest and families gathered together in prayer and friendship. And I will always remember Father Gregory as one of the greatest gifts Mearns ever had.”

Claire Marie Nobert-Boddez

Claire, second eldest daughter of Fred and Alice, attended elementary and junior high school at St. Charles in Mearns, continuing on to high school at Camilla High in Rivière Qui Barre, Alberta. Claire reminisces of many fond memories of her early years in Mearns. “How I treasured the parish picnics, going to watch the ball games and unforgettably, the Mearns General Store where after attending church on Sundays, Mom and Dad would give us a dime to buy a weekly treat. My favorite was an ‘Extra Big’ chocolate bar or a good old-fashioned ‘orange crush’ soda. The one person who left a lasting impression on me and will always have a little piece of my heart was Father Gregory. What beautiful memories I have of his visits to our home, playing cards and catch ball with my siblings and I. He always took the time for us and made us feel so special.”



Claire Nobert and Marcel Pelletier, August 6, 1965



Marcel and Claire (Nobert) Pelletier with children Marc, David and Lise



Claire's Children and Grandchildren – Sept. 6, 2007. Back row L to R: Rob Smith, David Pelletier, Marc Pelletier. Middle row: Lise (Pelletier) Smith, Christine (Mireau) Pelletier with daughter Kyra (19 months), Glenda (Deering) Pelletier. Front row: McKenna Smith (3 months), Michael Smith (2 yrs), Katie Pelletier (3 yrs), Sarah Pelletier (2 yrs)



Adrian and Claire (Nobert) Boddez – July 23, 2005

On August 6, 1965 Claire married Marcel Pelletier of Legal, Alberta at St. Charles Church in Mearns. They made their home in Morinville, Alberta, later moving to Edmonton, Alberta. During their twenty-five year marriage, Claire and Marcel were blessed with three wonderful children, Marc, Lise and David. Marc is married to Glenda (Deering) and resides in Edmonton, Alberta. They have two daughters, Katie and Sarah, and another child on the way. Lise is married to Rob Smith and lives in Mission, British Columbia. They have one son, Michael, and a daughter, McKenna. David is married to Chris (Mireau) and lives near Devon, Alberta. They have one daughter, Kyra.

Claire married Adrian Boddez in July of 2005. After working for the Edmonton Catholic School Board for 24 years, she retired in June of 2006. Claire and Adrian reside in Edmonton.

Janet Simonne (Nobert) Macdonald

I was born May 2nd, 1948 during the spring thaw... bridges were out and roads were impassable. My father had no choice but to serve as 'mid-wife' and help bring me into this world, the fifth child of six children born to Fred and Alice Nobert.

When I started school, 'school' was the basement of St. Charles Church until the new two-classroom facility was completed. I remember how exciting it was to move into the new building that had bathrooms in the basement. No more



Dennis and Janet (Nobert) Macdonald – March 30, 1970

outhouses! My classroom housed grades one, two and three with Sister Francella as the teacher. Motivation games and/or prizes for good work were always part of our day. After grade three we moved into the grade four, five and six classroom with Sister Petra as teacher. There we made scrapbooks, acted out skits, wrote songs and poetry to develop our Social Studies units. Junior high was another one-classroom setting for three grade levels with Sister Adela as teacher. Student enrollment was not very high. Our grade nine class consisted of only nine students. High school meant a move to Camilla, Rivière Qui Barre with many more students, especially boys!

Some of my best memories of Mearns include the Christmas concerts in the church basement where we would perform choral pieces, drills or dance routines and of course participate in the Rhythm Band, of which I was the conductor. The girls wore white blouses and navy blue skirts, little capes and box hats. The nuns were excellent teachers. Midnight masses in Mearns were very special occasions as Father Gregory would come up to the choir loft after the service to distribute little brown bags containing candies, an orange, and some holy picture or medal in appreciation for us singing in the choir. Parish picnics, chicken suppers with mom's lemon meringue pies, track and field meets, gathering at the Mearns General Store every



Dennis & Janet Macdonald Family – Oct. 2007. Back row L to R: Jill Macdonald, Shannon, Aayla, Sienna & Kurc Vance. Front row: Dennis, Janet & Lee Macdonald

Sunday after Mass, sampling Theresa Ricard's hot cinnamon buns... these are my fond memories of Mearns.

After graduating from grade 12, I enrolled at the University of Alberta in the field of Education and taught grade five at Namao School for a couple of years. I married Dennis Macdonald, son of John and Gertrude Macdonald of Calahoo, on March 30, 1970 in the Mearns church. We moved onto an acreage just west of St. Albert and still live there today. We have three children, Shannon, Lee and Jill. Shannon was born September 24, 1971, one of the first babies to be born at the Sturgeon General and the only baby on the maternity ward at that particular moment (we both got a lot of attention). Shannon graduated from the U. of A. with a degree in Graphic Arts. She married Kurc Vance, son of Kurt and Jeannette Vance of Edmonton, in April of 1996 and they bought a home in St. Albert. They have two daughters, Aayla, born Feb. 7, 1999 and Sienna, born Nov. 24, 2001. Our son Lee was born December 15, 1972. It wasn't very busy on the maternity ward so I spent my extra time painting Christmas scenery on the glass panes of the nursery. Lee's first love is music, writing songs and playing in various venues in the University area while earning his living as a carpet layer. Jill, our youngest daughter, was born November 25, 1977. She is our bilingual student having taken French Immersion at Father Jan School in St. Albert. Jill studied Theatre Design at Grant MacEwan College and resides in St. Albert.

Gloria Louise (Nobert) Nourse

Gloria was born July 9th, 1951 at the General Hospital in Edmonton, the sixth child of Fred and Alice Nobert and the baby of the family. Like the rest of my brothers and sisters, I attended school in Mearns throughout my elementary and junior high

years then traveled by means of the yellow school bus all the way to St. Albert to complete my high school education. After graduating from St. Albert High, I went to work for AGT in Edmonton, and later moved with my best friend Marilyn Kluthe to find new adventures in Fort McMurray, Alberta. We worked for GCOS "Great Canadian Oil Sands" long enough to pay for a holiday in Hawaii and fur coats. I was glad to move back to Edmonton and again work for AGT.



Ron and Gloria (Nobert) Nourse – 1976

I married Ron Nourse, son of Charles and Pat Nourse of Burns Lake, British Columbia, in 1976 and became the first of my siblings to leave the Alberta nest. In March of 1977, Ron and I moved to Inuvik where we spent two years (our son Steve was born in Inuvik and was the only white baby in the hospital). From Inuvik we flew to Edmonton and drove to our new home in the beautiful Fraser Valley where we still live today.

We have three wonderful children. Our eldest daughter Jennifer graduated from Simon Fraser University in the field of biochemistry. She is married to Travis Hobbs and lives in Calgary, Alberta. Our son Steven lives in Abbotsford, B.C. and, after graduating from High School, took up a trade in welding, though sculpting and painting is his passion. Our youngest daughter Allison graduated from the University of British Columbia with a degree in Pharmacy, spent two years in Toronto and is now back in Vancouver. She is our globetrotter, having toured most of Europe, the Balkan states, Peru, Cuba and Australia.



Gloria and Ron Nourse family – Steven, Ron, Gloria, Allison and Jennifer – 1994

Nobert, Roger

By Roger Nobert

I had a close active family while living in Mearns. Four of Mom's sisters and seven of Dad's siblings belonged to the parish. Enclosed are a



Fred & Alice Nobert's Wedding Day – Nov. 7, 1939. Back row L to R: Urbanie Nobert, Clarisse DeTonnancour, Alice Turgeon, Fred Nobert, Hélène Turgeon, Obeline Nobert. Front row: Roger Nobert and Margo Cochlin.

couple of family pictures of me as a youngster. I attended Aunt Alice and Uncle Fred's wedding at Grandpa Turgeon's. On one photo I am with my cousin Margo Cochlin, the newly weds, and all my living grandmothers.

In the other family photo, I am beside my mother in front, and my great grandfather (tall gentleman center right) Cleophas Turgeon who was the first policeman/fireman for the City of Edmonton. He was technically inducted into the Edmonton Historical Society with a Historical Recognition Award on September 13, 2001.

Emile Nobert, my father, was born March 1907 and married my mother, Elizabeth Turgeon, (sister of Alice Nobert) in 1933.

They owned and ran the Mearns General Store from 1934 to 1945 before selling it to Mr. Joe Sagan who in turn sold the store to Dan and Catharine Sheehan around 1947. They had three children: Angeline, Roger and Emile Junior. Angeline and Roger started school in Alcomdale. They walked to school on the train tracks in the summer and went by horse and caboose in the winter by themselves and also with the Joe Ricard Family.



Emile Nobert family photo taken Aug 1983. L to R: Emile, Angeline, Emile Jr., Elizabeth, Roger

Emile went to British Columbia to seek a new home and job and was followed by Elizabeth and family in late 1947 to Oyster River on Vancouver Island. They moved to Port Alberni in 1950.

Mearns still played a dramatic role in their lives as Roger visited his uncles and aunts in 1952. He had borrowed a shotgun from his Uncle Fred Nobert, who he was staying with, and with his cousin Richard, (Fred and Alice's oldest son) they went hunting. The gun accidentally discharged, partially removing Roger's left hand from his arm. Only by great effort by Richard, Uncle Fred and their neighbor Maurice Durand, his life and hand were saved.

Emile and Elizabeth left their award winning home in Port Alberni and retired to Parksville, B.C.

Emile passed away on September 14, 1994 and Elizabeth followed her husband of 60 years on March 1, 1997.



Roger and Eva Nobert with children Roger Jr. and Colette in photo taken February 2001

O'Neill, Bernard (Barney) & Margaret

By daughter, Bernice O'Keefe (O'Neill)

Bernard (Barney) Vincent O'Neill and Margaret-Ellen (Nellie) O'Neill (nee Whalen) arrived from Ontario in 1921. After spending a short time in Saskatchewan, they arrived in Edmonton and then to the farm of my father's brother, Pat, the



Nellie and Bernice O'Keefe (O'Neill)

home property of what was later Walter Ellett's. Subsequently, within a short time, they homesteaded a quarter section one mile west and one mile north of that location. They built a small home in which they lived until 1956.

They were blessed with six living children and five babies who died at birth or shortly after. The living children were: Joseph Hugh, Thomas Matthew, Helen Marie, Michael Francis, Daniel Leo and Mary Bernice.

In the early years, Mother and Dad were active members of St. Emerence Catholic Church in Rivière Qui Barre. This was a six mile one way trip to Sunday mass. In minus zero weather this could be a very uncomfortable trip with horses and sleigh. St. Charles Catholic Church was built in 1929 and was only two and a half miles from home, which made life a little easier. This was their parish until 1956. Oh, those wonderful chicken suppers, church picnics, good food and baseball games! Mom cooked for two or three days before the event, and of course was always working in the Church kitchen before, during and after these events.

Belle Valley School was our educational home for all of our primary and secondary grades, and we were blessed with many wonderful teachers. Once a week the priest would come, mainly from Riviere Qui Barre, and teach catechism after regular school hours.

Hugh, Tom, Mike and Dan all finished their schooling at Saint Anthony's Franciscan College in Edmonton, graduating from grade 12. Helen finished her high school at the FCJ Convent, a girls' school in Edmonton. Both these places were boarding schools. Being the youngest, I sure was lonesome for my siblings when they went off to Edmonton.

Helen went on to Misericordia Nursing School graduating in 1947 as an R.N. She later went to University of Alberta and received her BSc. in Nursing in the early 1960's.

I was the only sibling to be part of Belle Valley School, being moved to Mearns and becoming St. Charles School in 1948. I went to St. Mary's girls' school in Edmonton for grade 12 and received my nursing R.N. in 1957 from Misericordia Nursing School.

Growing up on the farm taught us many things about life in a family and in a community. Neighbours were wonderful and always there, in times of need and times of joy. We learned to respect God's creations, being so close to nature. It taught us humility and suffering. Those old farm homes without insulation, central heating, electricity and running water were truly an endurance test. My

parents worked hard to provide for us, despite the difficulties.

My father joined the Army in the early 1940's to help earn cash so we could finish our education, which was a big sacrifice for my parents. It was a joyous day when he returned and was home again.

Hugh O'Neill married Gertrude Hermanutz in 1948. In the earlier years of marriage, he was with United Grain Growers, which took them to many smaller places. From there he worked for oil companies, which also took them to various places. They settled in Edmonton in the late 1950's. They had four children. Gertrude passed away in 2000 and is missed greatly by her family. Hugh now resides at St. Andrew's Centre in Edmonton.

Tom also joined the RCAF in the 1940's and became a pilot, which he loved. Following the war, he owned and operated a butcher shop in Portage La Prairie, Manitoba for several years. He came back to the farm to help Mom and Dad, worked for his brother's construction company and then moved to Edmonton with them in 1956. He married Donna Pugh in 1961 and they had six children. They lived in Sherwood Park and in Viking Alberta. Tom passed away at the age of 64 years.

Helen married Richard Korgan in 1947. They had four children, one of whom died as a young baby. She worked in the nursing field in many areas, from delivery room, T.B. nursing, to Public Health most of her life. She had a great love of nature and became a great painter in the later years. She also loved antique collecting and traveling. She died in 2001, from a fairly short illness of Lou Gehrigs disease. We miss her a lot.

Mike worked for Waterloo Motor Mercury car sales after high school, which enabled him to play hockey for the Edmonton Mercury's. During the



The O'Neill Family – Bernard, Nellie, Helen, Dan, Tom, Mike, Hugh and Bernice

time he was with Waterloo, he won a new car, which was a big thrill for a farm boy. He married Terry Smith in 1950 and they have five children. Mike was in partnership with my brother Dan in a construction business for fifteen years. He later worked for R. Angus, from where he retired. He lives in St. Albert.

Dan worked in the gold mines in Yellowknife, NWT and Whitehorse, Yukon during his single life. He then came back to Edmonton where he started a construction business with his brother, Mike. He stayed with the company and his sons worked with him in later years. He married Shirley Brown in 1954 and they had six children. Dan always loved music, belonged to opera chorus and many different choirs and even was at practice the day of his sudden demise in 2002.



Nellie O'Neill's 90th Birthday – Margaret Wills, Jessie Gill, Nellie O'Neill and Margaret Ellett

I, Bernice, worked in nursing for ten years in many different positions, working for one year in Hawaii. I married Dan O'Keefe in 1963 and have four children. I stayed home for 13 years with the children and went back to nursing for 22 years. My mother lived with us for 15 years up to a few months before she died. It was a great privilege for us all.

After Mom and Dad moved to Edmonton in 1956, they kept in touch with their many friends. Dad passed away in 1966 and my mother passed away in 1982. Thanks to all those people in our lives during those growing up years. We were blessed.

Pelletier, Charles & Barbara & Dorothy Family

By the children

Charles (Charlie) August Pelletier was the third child of 12. His parents were Joe and Camille Pelletier and they moved to Morinville in 1923 from Rosetown, Saskatchewan. Barbara Catherine Kieser

was the eldest child of four girls. Her parents were Carl (Charles) and Elizabeth Kieser of Morinville. They lived three miles south of Morinville, just east of the highway. As young children the two oldest girls, Barbara and Clara, traveled into Cardiff by horse and cart during the summer for school. In the winter they lived at the convent in Morinville because it was too cold for the daily ride.

Charlie and Barbara were married May 20, 1941 at St. Jean Baptiste Church in Morinville. After they were married, they lived in Calgary where Charlie volunteered for the Army during WWII as a motor mechanic.

On January 1, 1946, Charlie returned to Morinville after the war. Ralph Smith, a traveler for the Alberta Pacific Grain Company, took Dad with him for a day to introduce him to the grain business. The elevator agent in Mearns was leaving and Dad was offered the job.

Charlie, Barbara and their two sons, Daniel, born June 18, 1942 and Charles Jr., born February 2, 1944, moved to Mearns in April 1946. On November 29, 1946 Yvonne was born and on September 6, 1948 Lorette joined the family. Betty Jean gave us 'girl power' on October 22, 1950 (three girls to two boys) but Gordon evened it out to three and three on February 22, 1954.



Charlie with mail caboose

The Mearns area was new to Mom but not to Dad. As a young man of around 18 years old, Dad had a mail route from Morinville to Riviere Qui Barre. He would travel by horse from Morinville, west to Nick Perrott's corner, turn south and go into Riviere Qui Barre, then back into Morinville. He would pick up, sort and deliver the mail three times a week for \$35 a month. Bread would also be included for delivery to RQB from Morinville. For winter, Dad had a closed-in caboose sleigh with a stove inside to keep warm. He would drive Dr. Ferguson out to the Alexander Reserve in his caboose sleigh on cold winter days and Dad would often be told to help when they got to the patient.

When we first moved to Mearns, the three families with children in town were Sheehans, Ricards and us, the Pelletiers. We started with four girls and two boys in 1946 and by 1954 there were 12 girls and three boys.



Dr. Ferguson ready to go see a patient in Charlie Pelletier's mail caboose

Our little yellow house was across the road from the elevator and had two bedrooms, a front room (living room), kitchen and entry. There was room for a stove in the front room and a wood and coal stove in the kitchen, but not much else. The boiler on the wood stove and a big kettle provided the hot water. When we got the propane stove we still used the kettle to heat water for dishes and baths and



Back row, L to R: Daniel & Charles Pelletier, Maureen Sheehan. In the wagon: Lorraine Ricard, Yvonne Pelletier, Janet Sheehan

moved the wood and coal stove to the basement to heat the water for washday.

When they first arrived there was a water pump in the house but the water in the well was too muddy to drink or use for washing and cooking, so Dad hauled water from Alex Morrison who lived where Lawrence and Teresa Brenneis later lived. Eventually a new well was dug and the pump was put on the porch outside. Later Dad put an electric pump in the basement and we had cold running water in the kitchen sink and the entry sink. Both sinks drained outside so we didn't have to haul out the dishwater anymore. What a luxury!

Originally the house had a phone, but no power. Dad used a 12-volt generator with a washing machine engine to give power to the house and the elevator. It would be kept running by filling the gas tank as needed and rebuilding the engine every so often. In 1951, power came to the area but the limit was 110 volts to run the house and elevator. Ready Electric was the power company logo. Power led to luxuries and we got a 12-inch black and white TV in about 1955. Saturday night hockey and Don Messer's Jubilee were the highlights of the week. As kids we were glued to the TV watching the Channel 3 test pattern. One channel, and it didn't start until noon or 1:00 pm and on top of that most TVs of the day spent about 25% of their life at the repair shop. A trip to Morinville wasn't complete until after a stop at the 'Tube Tester'.

In about 1946-47, wheat was selling at 25 cents a bushel, barley at 8 cents and oats at 5 to 6 cents a bushel. Around 1948-1949 Dad built the chicken coop (eggs were selling at 25 cents a dozen), garage (it had tin siding) and the lean-to. The chicken coop was large enough for 300 chickens and a cow! There was a walled off area as you walked in the door for



Charles and Barbara Pelletier family taken in 1955. Back row, L to R: Charles, Barbara holding Gordon, Daniel. Middle row, L to R: Charlie Jr., Yvonne. Front row: L to R: Betty Jean and Lorette

Bessie. Dad milked twice a day and Mom and Dad made butter for home use. Eggs were sold to the egg grading station in Morinville. The chickens were used for eggs and meat through the winter and for the Mearns chicken supper. Spring would mean baby chicks in the brooder until they could be moved to the freshly cleaned chicken coop. Wages were very low and with a family of six kids and two adults and no Alberta Health Care program in place, finding ways to feed the family and pay the bills was a must. When we were old enough to climb that long outside ladder to the attic we re-discovered the butter churn and the wooden butter press.

Around this time Dad also built a third bedroom onto the house and it became the 'boys' bedroom'. The boys, Dan and Charlie, were the nail straighteners, a habit that stayed with both of them through adulthood.



L to R: Charlie, Daniel, Yvonne and Lorette playing on the front sidewalk

When the boys were around eight and ten years old, Dad built a car for them. It had a wood frame, a washing machine motor for power and a real steering wheel. Looking back, it would have resembled a Flintstone's car without the roof. It was wonderful!! It worked like a charm and we girls were so proud and anxious for our turn for a ride. All went well until Betty Jean got her hair and kerchief wound in the pulley. There was a lot of noise, but no blood or permanent injury though Bette still blames Yvonne, the driver, for her 'thinning hair'. As younger sisters with capable older brothers, whatever the boys did, we wanted to do too.

The early years were hard years for everyone and no one had a lot of money. Entertainment centered round the school and CWL activities at the church – chicken suppers, parish picnics and Christmas concerts. There were dances in Alcomdale and Busby. It cost 50 cents to get in and

there was no alcohol served at the dance. However, the moonshine was available in the parking lot. There were local bands that played for the dances. Ernie Houle had a band and Johnny and Herman Kieser, Mom's uncles, played in it. The Satellites, another local band, also played at the dances. They were very young at the time and the band was still popular when we kids were going to dances in Alcomdale, Busby and Morinville. In 2006 they played for a 40-year school reunion dance in Villeneuve. Now that's staying power!

Curling in the early 1950s was very much a part of our life. Dad was one of the volunteers who built the curling rinks in Alcomdale, Busby, Rivière Qui Barre and in Morinville. As kids we spent many hours at the rink watching Dad play and getting so excited when our dad made a good shot. Memories of climbing up the tiered wooden bench seats and the smell of fries cooking are still vivid. As we grew up, some of us curled on school teams and Yvonne has been a curler for many years.

In 1951 a spring snow storm blew in so much snow we had a snow bank right up to the roof line on the east side of the house where the door was. Dad and the boys had to dig a tunnel to get out of the house and down the sidewalk and the boys had to dig Collie out of his doghouse too. Poor dog was snowed right in.

June 13, 1951 Dad applied for a license as a retail dealer in sporting goods, radios & parts, cream separators, automotive parts & accessories. December 22, 1951 the License was granted and 'Mearns Service' was born. Dad did automotive work for people, took a heavy-duty mechanic course, and got a job at the Egg Lake Coal Mine. Charlie Jr. still has the company seal in his collection of treasures.

Mom had a natural talent for sewing right from the time she was a teenager. She used to take suits and dresses and re-cut and sew them into dresses and suits for herself. She sewed all of our clothes on a treadle Singer sewing machine. Dad put a motor on her sewing machine to make sewing a little easier. We girls remember our matching dresses, new Easter coats, First Communion and Confirmation dresses and the new dresses Mom sewed for herself. The boys probably had their shirts and pants homemade too.

Mom also played the accordion. It was a little accordion with three round buttons on one side and a double row of round buttons on the other; another treasure in Charlie's collection.

Dad bought each of us a second-hand bike, but first we had to show him that we could ride a bike. We girls had to practice on the boys' bikes until we

PROVINCE OF ALBERTA

LICENSE YEAR 1951 - 52

DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIES AND LABOUR

ISSUED BY EDUCATION, PROVINCE OF ALBERTA, AND FROM THE DATE HEREOF UP TO AND INCLUDING

THIS 30th DAY OF June 19 51 THE 31st DAY OF MARCH, 19 52

C. A. PELLETIER (MEARNS SERVICE)

MEARNS, Alberta

A RETAIL DEALER IN SPORTING GOODS, RADIOS & PARTS,
CREAM SEPARATORS, AUTOMOTIVE PARTS & ACCESSORIES

No 7212 H

GOVERNMENT OF THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA

THIS LICENSE IS VALID FOR THE YEAR 1951 - 52 AND IS SUBJECT TO A CONTINUOUS FEE

RECEIVED	ISSUANCE FEE	TOTAL
TER 9036	2.00	2.00

COPY 13

FOR FILING DEPT.

License 1951-1952 for Mearns Service

mastered it and the boys were tall so their bikes were pretty big. You would start off with one foot on the pedal and the other foot under the bar on the other pedal. Once you got enough speed to balance yourself you would swing your leg up over the bar and hope you didn't fall on the loose gravel. That was quite a feat!

On June 30, 1957 tragedy struck our family – we lost our mother. Barbara died from an aneurysm as a result of her asthma. There were six of us children; Gordon, the youngest, was two years old and Dan, the oldest, was 14. Charlie, Yvonne, Lorette and Betty-Jean were in between. Dad was devastated and mourned her loss for years. He was now our father and our mother and he worked so hard to keep all the pieces together. He learned to cook (his pot roast was amazing and his Sunday dinner of pork chops, potatoes and gravy still make my mouth water), sew (he hemmed our dresses up, then down as we girls grew and then passed the dresses on to the next one), and do the washing, hang the clothes on the line and do the ironing (he was very proud of his whites). He would make sure we all had clean, well-pressed clothes for school and church.

Eight years later Dad met Dorothy Fazackerley who was a friend of Agnes Tolley. Fritz and Agnes were dating at the time and Agnes knew a lady who was a widow, and Fritz knew a man who was a widower. They arranged a blind date and the rest is history. Charlie and Dorothy celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary January 23, 2005.



The Pelletier family in the summer of 1957. L to R: Lorette with Gordon, Yvonne with Betty Jean, Charlie and Daniel by the maroon Monarch.

Dad was the Alberta Pacific Grain elevator agent in Mearns for 21 years until the elevator was sold to United Grain Growers. Dad was transferred to Morinville as a relief agent for one year, then to the St. Albert Wheat Pool elevator for 12 years. Alberta Pacific Grain was bought by Federal Grain, which in turn was bought by Alberta Wheat Pool.

After 34 years as an agent, Dad retired. He was the last elevator agent in St. Albert and after Dad left the elevator was closed and is now a museum. Mom took a movie camera to the elevator one day during the last year Dad worked and made a movie of a typical day in the elevator. In February of 2007, an agricultural display was presented at the museum in the St. Albert Centre and the elevator was featured along with photos, artifacts and Dad and Mom's super 8 movie. It was transferred to CD for viewing in the museum.

When Charlie (Chuck) was in about grade eight and nine the boys would go to Camilla School to take shop. He and two friends had a project to build a boat. It was a pretty major shop project and they worked very hard. They had a washing machine motor for the engine but the problem was how to put the shaft through the floor of the boat without the water coming in. That was solved with diagonally cut blocks of wood set in a certain way both inside and outside the bottom of the boat. Charlie made the



Charlie in the elevator office in St. Albert, July 1980

propeller out of a sheet of metal. He cut it out and bent the blades to propel the boat through the water. I remember watching him go across Fraser Lake in that magic boat.

Homemade motorbikes were starting to appear. Paul Sabourin and Richard Nobert built the first ones in the area. Brakes were not the best so you had to put your feet on the front wheel to help stop the bike. Charlie put a motor on his bike and Dad helped with the welding. The design had a bit of a flaw and the front end broke apart when he was riding one day. That was a moment he still remembers.

As kids, we remember

- The setting sun reflecting off the red elevator
- Climbing to the top of the elevator and looking out the window or the trap door on the roof. You had to climb the ladder because we weren't allowed to touch the man lift. I didn't know it at the time, but it ran by balancing the rider's weight with another set of weights. The ladder went straight up 90 feet and was against the chute that carried the grain to the various bins throughout the elevator. The terror as you climbed higher into the darkness, then the anxiety as you clung to the top rung and stretched your leg as far as you could to reach the top floor, and finally the exhilaration as you were safely on the floor and able to look out the window. Everything down there looked so small!
- The challenge of standing as close to the track as we could when the train was picking up or dropping off grain cars at the elevator. The engineer would toot the horn sternly if he thought we were too close.

- Playing anti-i-over the garage by the house or the gas shed by the elevator office. You had two teams, one on each side of the building. One team had a ball that they threw over the roof of the building while chanting "anti-i-over". The other side was to catch the ball, then run around the building to catch the other team members. Once you were caught, you belonged to the other team.
- Washday! Dad had two double boilers filled with water heating on the wood and coal stove in the basement. Two wringer washing machines and two big square tubs were set up so the clothes went from the first washer into the second washer and into the first and second rinse tubs. The wringer would move so the clothes went through it at each step. Then they were hung out on the line to dry. And they had to be hung a certain way – on the seams so they didn't stretch out of shape. In winter the clothes would be brought in as stiff as boards and gently folded over the inside clothes line and the table and chairs until they were dry enough to iron, fold and put away. There is no fragrance to equal the smell of clothes dried on an outside line, especially in the winter.
- Showering in the outdoor 'biffy' in the summer and the smell of the Camay soap. A shower!! How modern. Then the run back to the house wrapped in a towel.
- Being the first one to use the outside 'biffy' when a new hole had been dug; and being the last one to use it before the new hole was dug.
- Walking down a country road on a sunny summer day listening to the birds, crickets and bees and smelling the grain in the fields.
- Walking down that same country road after a few days of rain and 'ditching'. In bare feet and with a hoe or sticks we'd dig these little ditches to drain the water off the road.
- Water fights on a hot summer afternoon. Using all the plastic bowls and containers that would carry enough water so you could still get the other guy wet after running halfway to Ricard's.
- Going to Sturgeon River for a swim and hotdog supper. Dad would say "get the picnic box ready, we're going to the river." In seconds we had the hotdogs, margarine, bread, mustard and kool-aid in the box and bathing suits and towels gathered. We'd drive to Majeau's farm; one of us kids would unhook and re-hook the wire gate after Dad drove through into the cow pasture where the river meandered. There would usually be a few other families enjoying the evening too. We changed into our swimsuits in the willows, walked around the cow pies and into the brown slow moving water. To us it was the clearest, cleanest, freshest

- river in the world. Some of the 'big boys' would jump off the diving board on the far side of the river. We played a game where we took turns sitting on a log with legs wrapped tightly around it while the others would dunk you into the water by rolling the log completely over and then right-side-up. The idea was to go completely around without letting go of the log with your legs – no hands allowed. Sometimes we would go to Sunnyside to swim but it was further away.
- Bike riding down Ellett's hill with 'no hands', or more daredevil, with your feet on the seat in a crouch position.
 - Picking saskatoons by Fraser Lake or by the side of the road on the way to the dump.
 - The string of tomatoe and juice cans with tops and bottoms cut off that always hung on the side of the garage until they were needed to protect young tomato plants in the garden.
 - The 'merry-go-round' that Dad made from a long board. It had a hole in the middle where it fit over a steel peg that was driven into a vertical pole. We loved it and played for hours. Yvonne got smacked across the nose with the merry-go-round one time. The school play was the following week and she was the 'black-eyed' Queen.
 - The telephone that hung on the wall in the living room. A big brown wooden box with a black microphone sticking out on the front that you spoke into and a receiver on a black fabric cord hanging on the hook on the side. The microphone was on a swivel so you could move it up or down to fit your height, and under it was an angled shelf for writing notes. We had a party line and everyone had their phone number and coded ring. Our phone number was 515 but our ring code was three long rings. Ricard's was three shorts and a long. Sheehan's was two shorts and a long.
 - Christmas concerts in the church basement. All of the kids in school would have a role to play in either the band or the singing or the Bethlehem story. Then Santa would arrive and give everyone big brown paper bags of candies, goodies and an orange.
 - Christmas Eve midnight mass. We would go to bed early and Dad would wake us up to get dressed for Mass. That oozy sick feeling stayed in your tummy until you were dressed in your new Christmas clothes and out in the fresh crisp night air. Staring in awe at the manger scene that miraculously appeared on the side alter to the right of the main alter. The subdued lighting inside and the blackness outside enhanced by the smell of incense and candles. Bright Christmas corsages proudly displayed on the front lapels of winter

coats. But the best part was after mass when big white snowflakes, almost too big to fit a small child's tongue, would float down from a navy blue sky. Eyes searching the rooftop and the yard for signs of Santa's sleigh and then discovering that he HAD come after all, while we were in church. The mad chaos of opening gifts and admiring and playing with your new treasures. And finally dropping to sleep in happy exhaustion.

- Lying on the bales in Ricard's field watching a winter sky filled with the brightest stars you could ever imagine.
- Trips to the dump. When Lorraine was old enough, Mr. Ricard would let her drive their small tractor with the hay wagon behind. We kids would go from Ricard's to Sheehan's to our house picking up the junk; then haul it to the dump. Can you imagine 10 to 15 kids sitting wherever they could find room amongst all the junk, taking the slow ride to the dump, unloading, then returning. As we got older and braver, we would jump off the wagon then run to catch up and jump back on again. Lorraine would be proudly driving along, mindful of the responsibility she had – don't wreck the tractor and don't kill any kids! (in that order)
- The smell of Therese Ricard's cinnamon buns as we gratefully ran home with a hot pan of buns for the family.
- Teaching myself to play 'My Grandfather's Clock' on the piano at school. Sister Petra would help me locate a key when the noise got too annoying.
- Watching the Saturday night movie. The house would be sparkling clean – floors washed and waxed, dusting done, school stuff put away, waiting for Sunday. We had two wall scone lights in the living room in addition to the central light. When those two lights were the only lights on, the house glowed.
- Making candy on the wood stove in the winter. We had small metal bowls with handles that we used to melt the butter and brown sugar. Once it was boiling 'just the right way' you ran outside with it and poured the hot syrup over a clean patch of snow to cool. That was the best taffy (or hard candy depending on how long it boiled) ever!
- Riding on the school bus to have a 'sleep over' or to play at Doreen Logan's while Dad worked at the mine. What a treat to ride a school bus! When you lived 'in town' you had to walk or ride your bike every day, nothing as glamorous as riding a big yellow school bus!

The years passed and we all moved from elementary school in Mearns or Morinville to grade

10 in either Morinville or Riviere Qui Barre. From there it was on to Edmonton to complete high school. Looking back, our time in Mearns was such a short one, yet the memories are enormous and forever.

Daniel worked on farms in Alberta and then moved to BC in the Port Coquitlam and Langley areas where he did farm work, house renovations, appliance repair and gardening. For someone with no formal post-secondary education he was very good. He loved to garden and designed and built a folding plant stand to fit the balcony of his apartment. It would be full of blooming plants throughout the long Langley summer and fold neatly away for the winter. He designed a side table that stepped up four levels so it would be tall enough to fit his 6'6" height when he was sitting in his chair. He enjoyed listening to records and watching movies and collected both, especially the old classics. Dan was diagnosed with bowel cancer just after he had come to Mearns for the school reunion in 2004 and died on April 1, 2005. He wanted to be cremated and didn't want a formal service so we had a memorial service for him on his birthday, June 18, 2005 and buried his ashes with Mom, Barbara, in Morinville.

Charlie married Isabella Bowen from Jasper, Alberta. Isabella's family is one of the original families of Jasper. Charlie and Isabella have two

children, Cindy and Jason. Charlie is a master electrician and has a knack for fixing anything that comes his way. He, like all the Pelletier men, inherited a natural ability to tinker, question and fix. Charlie was seriously burned by boiling, caustic acid and the last ten years have been a series of treatments, surgeries, doctor appointments and three cornea replacements. Between Isabella's expert nursing care and Charlie's optimistic outlook, they keep going and enjoying life: Cindy married Ken Aitken and they live in Squamish, BC. Cindy is a Chartered Accountant and owns her own business there. Jason married Dion Dagg and they have two children, Kadence and Liam. Jason specialized in safety on the oilrigs and worked out of country for some time. He is now teaching rig safety in Edmonton and area.

Yvonne married Dennis Edmondson from Edmonton and they have three children, Barbara, Jillann and Graham. Dennis died of a heart attack when the children were in their early teens and their family, like our family before, learned to survive and thrive under the watchful eye of a single parent and loving aunts and uncles. Yvonne worked for many years in the airline industry and has the distinction of opening the door on the first Western Airlines plane to land in Edmonton and close the door on the last Delta flight out of Edmonton. That was a sad event for everyone at the airport. At the time it closed, Western was owned by Delta Airlines. Yvonne retired in 1999. The family eventually moved from their acreage to Edmonton where Yvonne met Len Johnson. They were married in 2003 and moved to Powell River where they opened Suncatcher Bed & Breakfast. Yvonne and Len very much enjoy meeting people, the artistic and musical community in Powell River, the weather and their oceanfront home. Yvonne's children inherited the travelling bug from their parents and from years of holidaying out of a backpack. Barb is in Korea teaching English at a University, Jillann is presently settling in Edmonton but longing to get back to Korea, China and Nepal and Graham is in Vancouver working in the computer field.

I, Lorette, married Terry Bruce from Smoky Lake, Alberta and we have two girls, Tara and Alison. I worked as a legal secretary until Tara was born and after the girls were settled in school started with the provincial government in the Communications area. I'm now working in a branch that produces publications about career choices and how to make them. Terry started work with Swift Canadian when he first moved to Edmonton and spent 37 years there until the plant closed in 1998. He took a power engineering course at NAIT and



Charlie and Daniel at the Mearns School Reunion 2004

started working at Grant MacEwan College in facilities. Terry isn't the kind of person to sit still so making sausage at the farm led to making and selling sausage and pepperoni through 'Uncle Terry's Sausage', which we still do today. Terry's love of nature, fishing and hunting led to buying a lighted deer or two to decorate the back yard at Christmas. That evolved into a whole herd, a large nativity scene, a children's Santa toyland scene, and lights everywhere. Christmas just wouldn't be Christmas without the backyard all aglow. Our house is small, but there is always room for one more and Ukrainian Christmas with 30-40 people at the table is not unusual. We love to have nieces, nephews, cousins, aunts, uncles and siblings feel at home. Now is the time to enjoy each other's company. Terry and I are both looking forward to retiring soon and enjoying our four beautiful grandchildren (Grammaland is truly wonderful!) while continuing to travel whenever the opportunity arises. Tara married Brad McLellan from Vancouver and they have two boys, Nicholas and Cole. Tara is a landscape architectural technician. She designs parks for the City of Edmonton with a specialty in designing parks for children. Alison married Sean Maharaj from Calgary and they have a girl, Lauren and a boy, Keven. Alison is a Registered Nurse and specialized in delivering babies at the hospital in New Westminster while they lived there. She plans on training in the Neonatal care area. Sean is an accountant and, as of this writing, they are getting ready to move to Singapore in December 2007 for Sean's work.

Bette (Betty-Jean) married Larry Grant from Calgary and has two boys, Ryan and Cody. Bette works for the principal of a high school in Calgary after working for a number of years in the office of elementary schools. Bette, the only bilingual one of our family, learned French during her school years in Morinville and has been able to use her French at the schools she's worked in. Bette's warm smile and open heart are still her trademark, just like when she was a little girl. She inherited Mom's natural sense of colour and design. Ryan graduated with distinction from U of C in engineering and is enjoying his chosen career while Cody is our mechanical genius (the Pelletier gene continues).

Gordon followed Bette to Calgary where he met and married Rose Kreis. They live in Langley with their two special puppies Chelsea and Megan and also spend a great deal of time at their summer home on Savary Island. Gordon is a financial manager with Ford Motors in Abbotsford and Rose is in the wholesale clothing industry which has her travelling throughout B.C. Rose and Gord hosted a birthday weekend for Yvonne's 60th birthday in Victoria in



Charlie and Dorothy at the elevator museum opening, St. Albert, 2006

2006 – the same weekend of the 'big snow' in Victoria. Yeah, sure, it only snows in Edmonton, huh!

At the time of this writing, Dad and Mom (Dorothy) still live in their own home in Edmonton, on Sherbrooke Avenue. Dad is 92 and Mom is 86. They still love to travel, play cards, and visit with family and friends. They travelled south every winter for 27 years after they retired, until Dad had a stroke one winter. It's a little more difficult to get around now, but his spirit is still strong and Mom always has fresh baking in the cookie tin and a homemade pie in the deep freeze.

Pettibone, Ross & Ada Family

By Ross Pettibone

The Story of Early Alcomdale & the Pettibones

My dad, Ross D. Pettibone, came to Alberta from Michigan, U.S.A. about 1909. He settled on homestead SW 2-57-1-W5 approximately eight miles west of the present town of Alcomdale. He married my Mother, Ada Jewel, on October 15, 1912.

In 1912 Mr. & Mrs. Fred Phelps had arrived in Alberta from Howell, Michigan. They homesteaded

near the Pettibone farm on SE 35-56-1-W5. With them came Ada Jewel, a daughter of Mrs. Phelps. Ross Pettibone had delivered milk to the Phelps home in Michigan and had met the young lady.

Other neighbours in the district were Billy Mills, the Kennetts and Tommy Lovelock. Dad's parents came to the district and lived across the baseline road for a time.



Harriet, Theo and Ross on homestead – 1918

Four of us children were born on the homestead, Theo on May 14, 1914, Harriet on May 27, 1915, myself, Ross on August 15, 1917 and Eunice on March 19, 1919. I weighed less than three pounds. Maybe that accounts for the fact I only grew to about 5 feet 4 inches tall. The story I grew up with was that I had been brought by the postman.

Both sets of my grandparents returned to the United States about 1918 after a fire destroyed the Phelps' home.

I have very little knowledge of the homestead but believe that Dad raised some good shorthorn cattle. Of course, there is a black sheep in every family and in our case the honour goes to Uncle Claude who I never knew. He apparently was entrusted with some cattle to sell in Edmonton. I think he sold the cattle and disappeared. About 30 or 40 years later we found he had settled in Bonners Ferry, Idaho and had a career in Idaho as a railroader.

My dad told of the 1918 flu epidemic. Apparently, he did not catch it but walked to several of his neighbours to do chores for them when they became ill.

About 1918 a Doctor Alcombrack bought several quarters of land in an area about three miles east of Independence, one of which, SW-5-57-26-W4. It became the location for Alcomdale. The railroad company put a siding on this piece of land. I believe Dr. Alcombrack with T. Lovelock and R. Pettibone were all involved with the formation of the town.

In 1919 we moved to Alcomdale and with

partner, Tommy Lovelock, built a two-story building for a store and post office with living quarters on the second floor. Both families were able to live above the store and post office. While living above the store, I remember being able to look down through a knothole and see people in the store.

About this time, J. Aslin had a store across the road to the west. A small metal clad bank building was built across to the north. This Union Bank operated for only a short time. When Ted Aslin married Eva Lovelock, it was their first home.

Wm. Hepburn built a dance and pool hall northwest of the Lovelock-Pettibone store. The front area of this fine building had pool tables and the rest was a good dance floor. I remember mounted animal heads on the walls of the pool area. I remember them as African animals but don't know now if this was so. Unfortunately the building was destroyed by fire after a very few years.

In about 1924 Dad sold his share of the store to T. Lovelock and we moved to the Porter Heath property. This was the closest area to the railroad and the railroad station. It consisted of a two-room house, a small office building, a single car garage and the former lumberyard. This yard was enclosed with a good picket fence about six feet high. This area became a large garden and I recall a lot of time spent weeding and hoeing. The picket fence was a fine snow fence and in the winter caused huge drifts on which to play and in which to dig caves. While at



Ross & Ada Pettibone



The Pettibone Children: Eunice, Harriet, Ross, Ardyce, Ralph, Ruth and Milton

this location four more children arrived, Ruth on December 3, 1921, Milton on August 14, 1924, Ardyce on July 28, 1926 and Ralph on July 9, 1928.

To the west of our property was the George Moore place. He had a fine large horse barn and a blacksmith shop. Their house was occasionally used as a hotel, or as we called it, a stopping-place for an odd meal or an overnight bed. Their property was a short block away and you can imagine the great interest of the blacksmith shop to a small boy – lots of sparks and hammering of red-hot iron. George and his wife had two sons; Jeff and Jordie. They were both about six feet tall which at that time was quite unusual.

The Tom Spargo family came to Alcomdale and had a butcher shop and later a trucking business. Wilfred Cyre and his wife operated an early auto repair.

The railroad came to Alcomdale in 1913. The E. D. and B.C. was the name at first, Edmonton, Dunvegan & British Columbia. I believe the main reason for the railroad was to haul logs from Northern Alberta to a huge sawmill located on the St. Albert Trail next to the Calder Railroad Yards. I remember the log pond where the logs were dumped next to the trail. Trainloads of logs were a common sight passing through Alcomdale. At a later date, in the early dirty 1930s, another notable item was the number of unemployed men riding the rails on trains northbound.

As we lived so close to the railroad, as kids we met every train that stopped at the station. The main freight at each stop north bound was one bag of mail for the post office, empty cream cans and sometimes a box of bread for the store.



Imperial gas pump in Alcomdale. Back: Ross & Eunice Pettibone. Front: Milton, Ruth and Ardyce Pettibone – circa 1929

The early 1920s were good years for the Pettibones. The Imperial Oil Agency was busy as more people had cars and tractors. We filled 45 gallon barrels by weight with hand pumps from two large storage tanks on the railroad siding. We also had a sight filler gas pump for cars and it was supplied from an underground tank. After the railroad siding was installed, a substantial loading platform and stockyard were built. The district farmers shipped their cattle by train. Ross Pettibone arranged for the shipment and the ordering of stock cars.

Ross also kept a few cattle that had free range around Alcomdale. As children we all learned to milk cows. At that time we did not have a cream separator and milk was kept in large shallow pans. The cream was skimmed off the following day. We always had lots of milk, cream and homemade butter.

The Massey Harris Farm Machinery was thriving and many seven-foot horse binders were sold, also some single and double disc drills and the odd hay rake or mower. The binder parts were delivered to our yard by truck and consisted of many bundles wrapped with wire. We would cut the wire with pliers and start putting them together with pliers and open-end wrenches. This was work that the older children could do quite well. Presto! In a day or two a working binder was available and a happy farmer would drive off with a new machine.

Dad had a 1920 Willys Overland car. It had a soft folding top, Isinglass side curtains, horsehair

stuffed upholstery and big headlights powered by acetylene gas from a tank on the running board and strangest of all, the steering wheel was on the right side. It ran for a few years then it sat by the garden fence as a popular place for children to play. Eventually, Jeff Moore took the engine out of it to use as part of a firewood-sawing outfit.

I started school in 1923 in the one room Alcomdale School one quarter of a mile west of Alcomdale corner. It was the usual type with a wood and coal furnace in the schoolroom, oiled flat-grained wood floor, single wood desks and of course, outdoor toilets. My first teacher's name was Mr. Carver. He was from England and tried to teach us to play cricket. His favourite form of discipline or punishment was to grab you by an ear. After a few years of Mr. Carver's teaching, Tim Harrington, who was Irish, became the teacher. At that time during the summer we all went to school barefoot. That was quite normal and no hardship. Mr. Harrington stayed about five years. I believe that from him I gained a love of reading. I got a good basic education that served me very well in later years when I worked in offices in Vancouver, Calgary and Edmonton.

This earlier school was replaced by the New England School in town. The new school had a full concrete basement room. This room was a much better place to play at recess time in winter rather than the cold outdoors. A second room was added at a later date.

One item of interest in about 1930 was about Ray Purches who lived two miles east of Alcomdale. He was duck hunting from a rowboat with a hired man. A shotgun was fired accidentally and Ray lost his right arm above the elbow. He was rushed to Alcomdale where my Dad had a new Willys Knight car. Dad quickly drove him to an Edmonton hospital. In spite of losing most of his blood, Raymond survived and was soon back in school. He became the left-handed catcher on our school softball team with only one arm.

As we lived close to the railroad, we were also close to the Gillespie Grain Elevator. We got to know Billy Jorgenson, the grain buyer or elevator operator. He was young and congenial and was in charge of all that interesting machinery; the big single cylinder engine that was sometimes hard to start; the hoist to tip up the grain boxes; the chain of buckets that carried the grain high up in the elevator to distribute to various bins and best of all, the man hoist that he could ride to the top. Billy had the first radio in our area, a crystal set.

Later on, the next elevator man was Andy O'Brien. He used to visit us at home and often played cards. The favourite game those days was

called Smear (I still know the rules of it), High, Low, Jack and Game or 4 Points.

Some years later when I was 20, I was offered the elevator job but had to decline as I had just recovered from a three week stay in the old General Hospital with serious pleurisy and thought the dusty elevator would not be a good idea.

Alcomdale had an active baseball team in the mid-twenties. Games were played on weekends and the competition included Busby, Pickardville and Riviere Qui Barre. Jeff Moore was the coach and Ross Pettibone was manager as Dad had brought his love of baseball from Cleveland. The team and everyone else would pile into the Pettibone truck for the trip to neighbouring towns. Names I remember were Dan Vandal as catcher and Leo Magirl as pitcher.

The Alcomdale Community League was formed about 1930. Mr. Hepburn donated two lots and a hall was built with volunteer labour. At a later date the community bought the property that included the bank building and the sports area where baseball was played and the annual picnic was held. Later again, in about 1958, the community built a two lane curling rink. Seventy-five years later this hall is still the center for community activities and dances.

Herman Libke opened a General Store on the Alcomdale corner in 1931.

In 1931 and 1932 the hard times hit our area and our family. There were now eight children and we had to get an addition built on the house. Farmers still needed to buy machinery and gasoline but had little money. They were used to getting credit but collecting was a problem.

My sister, Harriet, started doing housework and married Donald Whitson in 1935. The family moved to Fort Saskatchewan in 1954 and raised a great family of four girls; Phyllis, Donna, Marjorie and Sylvia and three boys; Roger, Wayne and David.

Theo was soon driving a truck for Alan Mills in Alcomdale. Eunice married Alan Mills in 1938 and they had a family of two girls; Florence and Lorna and four boys; Alan, Marshall, Gary and Melvin.

I went to work for a farmer when I was 14 at \$10 per month plus room and board. Then in 1937 I drove a truck for Alan Mills on a cream route between Sion and Alcomdale. In 1938 and 1939, I hauled gasoline from Turner Valley to Edmonton.

Ruth married Ward Fulton in 1941 and lived on the Fulton farm. They had two daughters; Lois and Kay.

When Dad finally retired from the business world in 1937 son-in-law Alan Mills took over the Massey Harris Agency and as well as trucking, started a general garage and repair business. The

Pettibones moved to Edmonton in 1943. In 1946 they visited California for two months as Dad still had relatives there. After a short illness, Dad passed away in 1948. Mother moved to the O'Brien Block in Fort Saskatchewan in 1952 and led an active life with the Women's Institute, family and friends. She made two trips back to Michigan to visit her sister and family. Finally, she moved to the Rivercrest Nursing Home in Fort Saskatchewan. Mom passed away in 1976.

In 1943 I was in the Canadian Navy on the destroyer St. Francis on convoy duty in the North Atlantic. Our ship had a mechanical breakdown at the mouth of the Foyle River near Londonderry, Ireland. We had been sent out with other destroyers to aid a convoy under attack by German submarines. This was one of the first episodes of the use of a new acoustic torpedo that homed in on the sound of our propellers. We tied up in Londonderry for repairs and as that would take several days, a few of us took leave and took a ferry to Scotland and a train south to London that was under a blackout at the time. My brother Theo was in the Canadian Army and somewhere in England but I was unable to locate him. However, one evening, in a pub café I saw a soldier across the room heading for an exit. Something was familiar so I ran and caught up with him and found it was my brother Theo. Imagine the odds of this happening with London teeming with hundreds of Servicemen from several countries. We spent one day together then I returned to my ship and Theo to his Army Camp. The invasion of France took place soon after and Theo was killed in Neufchatal-en-Bray, France on August 31, 1944. The breakdown of the St. Francis had a strange effect on its sailors as the ships that went out to rescue the convoy were mostly sunk with only a few survivors.

Milton worked at the main post office in Edmonton. He married Gertrude Nissen Forbes in 1952. They were divorced in January of 1969. About

1963 he bought the quarter section of land on which the Independence Hall is located. This was originally called the Dunham quarter NE 34-56-17-W4. Later, Harriet and Don Whitson lived and farmed on this property before their move to Fort Saskatchewan. Milton rented out the farmland and tore down the old house. He built a small new storage building, cleared the large farmyard, cut weeds, trimmed trees, planted a good garden and his yard became a great camping place for trailers. Milton made weekly trips to this place to care for his garden and to trim the grass with a large riding mower.

In 1969 he married Aileen Rigney Reith, another post office worker. For many years the Pettibones gathered at Milton's farm spot for their annual reunions.

Milton retired from the post office in 1979. Milton and Aileen bought a truck and fifth wheel trailer, joined a trailer club and did a lot of trailering including one group trip across Canada. They spent many winters in Arizona at the Cherokee Trailer Park. Milton had cancer and passed away in 1991. Aileen is still in their Horizon Village Home.

After Ardyce went to McTavish Business College, she worked for the J.I. Case Co. Here she met Odin Bottolfs. She married Odin in 1946 and moved to Thorhild where Odin had his business. In Thorhild she worked for the Bank of Nova Scotia. Later they moved to Kelowna, B.C. where Odin had a trucking business and Ardyce continued working in a bank. After Odin died in 1984, Ardyce returned to Edmonton and is still living here.

Ralph went to University and became a teacher. He taught in various places in Alberta and then became a principal in a Red Deer school. While in Red Deer he met another teacher, Joy Warner, and they were married in 1959. They built a home there where they still live today. They had three children; a boy, Ross and two girls; Myrna and Karen.

After I left the Navy at the end of the war, I worked in building demolition until 1954. Then I worked in Calgary, Vancouver and Edmonton for the Crown Assets Disposal Corporation for 20 years until I retired in 1977. I married Edna Warner in 1965 and we have lived in Edmonton since 1969.

I have a nephew, Ross Pettibone, who lives in Lacombe, Alberta, so the Pettibone name will be carried on by his son, Glen Pettibone.



American Thanksgiving Dinner at Ross Pettibone's – 1988. Standing: Ross, Milton, Ralph, Don Whitson, Ward Fulton. Seated: Eunice Mills, Aileen Pettibone, Joy Pettibone, Ardyce Bottolfs, Harriet Whitson and Ruth Fulton

Piton, Adrian (See Bray, Eugene)

Poirier, Heldége & Marie Louise

By Martial Bérubé

My grandfather, Heldége Poirier was born on July 12, 1893 in St. Cleophas, Quebec. He came west at the age of 16.

My grandmother, Marie Louise Houle, was born on January 23, 1892 in Morinville. Her parents, Thomas Houle and his wife Delina Rondeau, were some of the first settlers in Morinville. Delina's mother, Memère Rondeau was the midwife who brought 1,108 children into this world in Morinville and the surrounding area.

Heldége and Marie Louise were married on November 17, 1914 and moved to Meanook on a homestead that the bride's father, Thomas Houle, had acquired. This is where the couple's first child, Lucia, was born on September 16, 1915 in a log shack with a sod roof.



The Poirier family. L to R: Marie-Louise, Heldege, Lucia, Aristide

As I recall of what my mother, Lucia, has said of the Poirier family living on a farm about four miles east of Mearns and with the help of my mother's cousin, Lucien Houle, I have discovered the location to be on Range Road 260 and half a mile north of Twp. Rd. 565 on the west side of the road, north of Egg Lake Coal Mine.

As Memère always told me, the log church was where the cemetery is today and my mom has a baby sister, Germaine, buried there. Germaine was born on November 26, 1930 and only lived for five days.

I remember my mom speaking about going to catechism in the church, with Father LeBré teaching them religion. My mother Lucia and Jeanne Cloutier were great friends. Father Lebré instructed the girls not to let anyone play on the organ up in the choir loft while he was away for his dinner, but it wasn't long after the children were finished eating that everyone was upstairs playing on the organ. One or two of them were watching out the upstairs window to notify the others as to when Father Lebré would return to the church, but the priest came back to the church from another direction and the children discovered him standing in the aisle looking at all of them playing on the organ. The stairway wasn't wide enough for everyone to come down at once to take their places as Father Lebré stood in front looking back at all of the children saying, "Yes, the two oldest and the two worst."



Poirier family photo taken in 1929. Back row L to R: Henri, Heldege, Marie-Louise, Lucia. Front row L to R: Philippe, Jeanne

Jeanne Cloutier later married Victor Douziech.

Around 1923-1925 my grandfather Heldége's younger brother, Aristide, had an accident causing him to lose his left arm at the age of 18 years old.

In those years and many years later, neighbours would get together to saw logs and smaller trees for firewood.

Some of the names I remember my mother mentioning are Cyrille Cloutier, L'Hirondelles, Rottots, Logans, Schusters, Poulins, Halles, Noberts, Telliers, Riopels, and some Houles who were my grandmothers' brothers, including another brother Israel (Ike) Houle who was a grain elevator agent in the 1940's at Mearns.

Coming back to my mother's uncle's accident, my grandfather Heldége said to his younger brother, Aristide, "Don't come to help because I have all the

help I need.” But Aristide was the first one there in the morning to give a helping hand and as they were shutting down for dinner, Aristide put a twig in the saw blade to make things stop quicker and somehow caught his coat sleeve in the big nut of the blade of the pulley end, twisting his left arm to the point it had to be amputated. My mother said it was a terrible sight, as they could see bones sticking out of his coat sleeve. Marie Louise, used cloths and sheets to stop the bleeding and blankets to keep him warm and some of the men headed towards Morinville with a team of horses and a sleigh to get to the nearest person who had a car to make the trip as quickly as possible to the nearest hospital, which in those days was the Edmonton General Hospital.

After recuperating from his injuries, he became the elevator operator at the General Hospital since elevator doors and the elevator itself were manually operated.

Aristide was a very sad young man because he could not play his violin anymore and so decided to sell the instrument. At the age of 28, he was hit by a car and died of his injuries. He is buried in Edmonton.

Heldége and Marie Louise had four living children:

- Lucia was born on September 16, 1915 and died on December 10, 2006 at the age of 91. She married Henri Berube who was born on July 20, 1912 and died on January 31, 2006 at the age of 88.
- Henri was born on February 25, 1917 and died on July 16, 1988 at the age of 71. He married Augustine Ricard who was born on April 24, 1922.
- Phillippe was born on June 7, 1918 and died on February 8, 1990 at the age of 71. He married Cecile Boutin who was born on June 13, 1924 and died on April 15, 1988 at the age of 75.
- Jeanne was born on March 29, 1920 and died on March 15, 1996 at the age of 75. She married Ferd Vervynck who was born on May 20, 1914 and died on December 9, 1996 at the age of 82.

All four children were married in 1940 in the Morinville Catholic Church.

Heldége died on June 11, 1972 at the age of 79. Marie Louise died on her birthday, January 23, 1985 at the age of 93. Both are buried in the Morinville Cemetery.

Polakovits, John & Joan and Family

By Joan Polakovits (McDonald)

In 1933, John and Anna Hutar were renting the farm from a Mr. Springer. They had one daughter, Theresa. John Hutar fell ill and they asked Steve

Polakovits, Anna's brother who was living in Montreal with his wife Agnes, to come to Alberta to help them on the farm.

From there, Steve and Agnes, with their son John, born in 1933, worked on farms in the Spruce Grove area and rented in the Riviere Qui Barre area. In 1940, Steve bought the half section farm here in Mearns and John came home. John and Anna Hutar moved and bought one quarter in the Pickardville area.



Joan, John and Bob Polakovits

During the 1940's, Steve and Agnes had two more children, Elizabeth and Mary.

John started school in Riviere Qui Barre. He said it was a challenge as he only spoke German. He was just learning English when they moved to Mearns. His parents decided to put him in the convent in Morinville. That lasted only two months. He said it was dreadful. He was not allowed to speak his German or English, only French.

He then went to Belle Valley School and St. Charles School in Mearns. John quit school after grade eight to help his dad on the farm. He would work out on various jobs for spending money.

In 1960, he became serious about farming and bought the next quarter south from home, SW 21-56-26-W4.

Now it's 1963, this is where I come in. John and I were married July 13, 1963 and built a little house in the same yard as Steve and Agnes. It was quite a change in life style for me as I was born and lived all my life in Edmonton, but I was determined and wanted to know all about farming.

In 1968, John's sister Mary died in a tragic car accident. It was in that same year that John and I adopted our son Bobby. It didn't take long for him to become a very precious part of our family. He is a special needs person and he has taught us a lot.

In 1974, John's dad Steve passed away. His mom stayed on the farm until 1994, at which time

she went to the Youville nursing home in St. Albert, as she could no longer look after herself. She died in 1999.

John lost his right hand in a combine accident in 1987. After that, it got harder for him.

We kept going until 1997 but John's health continued to deteriorate so we rented the farm out in 1998 and John went to a nursing home. He died in January of 2000. Bob moved to St. Albert in 2000 and is very happy. He still comes home for visits.

I still live here with a very different life style.

Polakovits, Stefan (Steve) & Agnes

By daughter, Elizabeth (Liz) Burk



Steve and Agnes with John, 1940

Stefan (Steve) and Agnes Polakovits farmed one mile south of Mearns, Alberta starting in the late 1930's. Steve and Agnes (nee Kleinlaut) were both immigrants from Austria.

Stefan was born in Loimersdorf, near Vienna on December 27th, 1900. He immigrated to Canada sailing from Rotterdam on the SS Nieuwamsterdam on May 9th, 1928, arriving at Pier 21 in Halifax on May 17, 1928.

Agnes was born in Burgenland, Austria in 1905 and immigrated to Canada sailing from Liverpool on the Montcalm on February 28th, 1930 and arriving at St. John, NB on March 10th, 1930.

Separately they moved to Montreal, Quebec, where they met and married.

During the harvest of 1931 Steve's sister and brother in law, John and Anna Hutar, sent a telegram



Agnes, Steve, Mary and Elizabeth, 1949

from Mearns to Dad in Montreal requesting he come to Alberta to assist with the stooking and threshing as Mr. Hutar had had surgery.

Dad came and absolutely loved it. He sent for Mom to come by train from Montreal to Mearns. She arrived one night in February 1932 – dark, cold and could not speak the language and the Conductor said, "This is Mearns and this is where you get out." No one was there to meet her, but Dad eventually came, and thus began their Alberta adventure.

Stefan & Agnes were blessed with three children:

- John Francis, born in 1933 and deceased in January 2000. John married Joan McDonald on July 13, 1963 and they have one son, Bobby.
- Elizabeth Agnes, born in 1942. Married Ellis Burk and resides in Edmonton. They have three children and six darling grand-daughters
- Mary Agatha, the youngest, was born in 1944 and was tragically killed in a motor vehicle accident one mile from the farm in 1964.

Stefan passed away in 1974 and Agnes in 1999.

Over the years, with the struggles of hard work, Steve, Agnes and their family accepted their new country and to this day the family remains very proud of their cultural heritage and are proud Canadians.



Mary, with best friend, Lucille Nobert, walking down Jasper Avenue, showing off their new fur coats purchased with their first pay cheques, November 1962



Agnes' 80th Birthday – Jan. 1986. Standing L to R: Bob, John, Elizabeth (Polakovits) Burk and daughter Kelly. Seated: Agnes Polakovits



Steve Polakovits – circa 1970

Porter, James & Shelley

By Shelley Porter (Kluthe)

I married James Kenneth Porter on June 1, 1996. We have two daughters, Elizabeth Mary, born in 1997, and Amanda Joan, born in 1999. At present we live on an acreage near Mearns. I have lived in Red Deer, Calgary, Edmonton and St. Albert, and welcomed the opportunity to move back to the community in 2002 to raise our family. Elizabeth and Amanda attend Camilla School and enjoy living in the country, and the community spirit.

It's a warm feeling coming back to live in a community you belonged to as a child. Some of my favorite memories go back to the school and the church. Mearns church will always hold a special place in my memory, especially when I equate it with thoughts of my grandmother, Josephine Kluthe, and her involvement in the parish. I think back to the Sunday brunches held in the hall and the fall chicken suppers. Those times are cemented in my memory.

I especially remember the elaborate cakes that my Grandmother made for the Italian raffle and how important it was to be asked to help serve the tables as a young girl. It was sad to see the Mearns Hall demolished, but I remember really enjoying the last



Shelley (nee Kluthe), Elizabeth, Amanda and James Porter

party we had there. I also remember working at the Alcomdale Honey Plant.

I fondly recall the freedom we had in the country, including the fact that we could ride our bikes anywhere. Summers were fun-filled with lots of work, playing baseball, swimming in the dugouts and getting together with people in the community. Everything we needed was close at hand – family, friends and community.

My husband, James, grew up near Fort Assiniboine with his sister Kim Cross (nee Porter) and his parents Ken and Joan. James' roots go back to the Independence area where his Grandparents, Ken Sutton and Doris (nee Ritchie), met at a dance at the Independence Hall. They lived in the area for some time as did Ken's brother, Dez Sutton. James' Father, Ken, has a career in forestry and he is currently under contract with the Alexander First Nations, heading up their Forestry Services Division near Fort Assiniboine. James' mother, Joan, is a nurse at the hospital in Barrhead.

As is with everyone, we enjoy a busy lifestyle with our children. James is employed in sales with Hewlett Packard, a role that often takes him traveling away from home. When he is home we enjoy friends, family, camping, winter vacationing in hot spots and community involvement with the church, school and organized programs.

As a final note, a sincere thank-you for the time and involvement of those putting together this history book. What is today will become history tomorrow, especially for our children. It is important to have a means of connecting people with the community and reflecting on shared and individual memories.

Rakowski, Gloria (Brenneis)

By Gloria Rakowski

I am the middle child of Lawrence and Teresa Brenneis, born November 15, 1954. My little sister, Dianne, followed a scant twelve and a half months later so we two girls were like twins. Indeed, as we grew, relatives would often get our names mixed up and I continue to say that I respond to "Dianne" as easily as my real name.

Being the middle child of five, I learned quickly and early to play both sides of the fence. Although Dianne and I were so close that we often had struggles, I feel today that there are fewer nicer people in the world than my sister Dianne. I was often in awe of Carol, watching her do grown up things (date, go out, etc.) that I could only dream of doing. Dave and Greg would borrow some of the babysitting money I earned, stating in earnest they



Gloria and Richard Rakowski – Aug. 1976

would pay me back, and I am still waiting today for it (think of the interest!!!).

From an early age I knew I wanted to be a nurse. After making this claim and still living at home, I would be delegated to bandage and look after any wounds that occurred. Living close to the railroad tracks provided some opportunities as one day a motorist had a close encounter with a train. Fortunately he came away with only cuts and scrapes.

Teresa (Mom) encouraged us kids to read books and I was an avid reader, taking great advantage of the Extension Library that Mom enrolled us in. The book list came in the mail first, selections were made and a couple of weeks later, a large package arrived in the mail. What a treasure! Many were the warm afternoons I spent reading in the woods (also trying to avoid the chores Mom had in mind!). Mom had a large farm garden and we kids spent many afternoons weeding, picking vegetables or raspberries or hilling the potatoes.

Family, school and church were big priorities in our lives – a foundation that carries on to today. We all attended St. Charles School at Mearns and then went to Camilla School at Riviere Qui Barre. I remember that for grade one Mom sent me to school a week too early so I had to hang out with Carol and her friends because there were no other grade one students there yet!!

Our life on the farm was full as we were responsible for daily chores, our homework and

helping out around the house. When we became of high school age we were bussed to St. Albert High School making for long days. Unfortunately, during the year I was in grade twelve, our family suddenly lost our mom. This was a major blow to us and we still miss her to this day. However, my feelings are that she is proud of us and actually is with us every day. How we wish she could be with us to see all her beautiful grandchildren (and now, great grandchildren!).

The Royal Alexandra Hospital School of Nursing was where I started my nursing career. I graduated in 1975 and have worked as a nurse ever since, and I'm still with the Royal Alex!!

During nursing training I met Rick Rakowski. He was a NAIT student at the time but over the next few years earned a teaching degree from the U of A. After graduating, I worked while Rick was pursuing his studies. We married on August 14, 1976 but unfortunately have since separated and divorced. However, my two wonderful children continue to be the center of my life. Terra was born on April 22, 1981 and Ryan on December 28, 1983.

Terra was a precocious child, always asking questions and trying to figure things out. Ryan was an extremely busy child and kept us going with his antics (putting dirt into the VCR, toys into the oven). Terra excelled at everything she did – whether it was schoolwork or dancing. Terra took ballet, jazz and lyrical dancing until high school, even considering dancing as a career. However, she was also interested in teaching and has completed her Education degree and is now in her third year of teaching English and Biology to grade seven, eight and nine students. Ryan played many different sports in his school career, always doing extremely well. However, his main interest is in the outdoor pursuits like golf and hunting. He decided to work for a while following high school and is now back in college and hitting the books again.



Terra, Ryan and Gloria Rakowski – Dec. 2005

My nursing career has always been a great source of satisfaction, as I love the work (most days!!). The high stress environment of the Operating Room is where I have found my niche. Being there, on often the worst day of peoples lives, gives me a sense of accomplishment and knowledge that I made a difference and contributed to their recovery. I have been the manager of the Women's Operating Room for the last six years. I find that being involved in the planning and growth of a program, as well as continuing with the day-to-day work, is extremely satisfying. There are many challenges, but I work with a great team. Planning for a new building for our program has given me the opportunity to learn to read architectural drawings, something I never thought a nurse would be doing.

Our family has supported and continues to support each other; this comes out of the foundation made by our parents. Our cousins, aunts and uncles and their families continue to be a part of our lives. Even though we have families of our own, our extended family remains integral to our well being.

****We**, as a family have always been grateful to Gloria's career, since we have made use of her knowledge many times, especially at reunions when some child got hurt doing something and, due to the law of probability, it was one of my children (having had five)... Carol

Rebke, Ryan & Courtney (Palmer)

By Courtney Rebke

While I don't have an overly extensive story to tell, I have a story nonetheless. I am the second of two children born to Rick and Dawne Palmer. The last 25 years have been an experience I will cherish for the rest of my life. Growing up in Alcomdale, I had opportunities and experiences that many children don't get to have. My grandparents, Dan & Grace Brenneis, lived right around the corner and I was free to roam between the two houses from very early on. Some of my earliest memories are of digging in Grandma and Grandpa's massive garden, munching on peas and berries until I had a stomach ache. I spent many days with Grandma, as my mom worked with Grandpa at the elevator in town. Periodically, Grandma would send me over to the elevator with a quart sealer of lemonade and strict instructions to have one glass of lemonade with Grandpa and then come straight back. She knew not to expect me for a couple of hours, as I would explore the elevator, run scientific tests on canola seeds, and just generally get under foot until Grandpa would decide that it was time to move one of the grain cars a little further down the track and I



Ryan and Courtney Rebke, July 1, 2007

would hop on and go for a ride. I would then meander back to Grandma's, arriving with my pockets so full of rocks that my pants were almost falling off.

Alcomdale is a place for exploring. It's no wonder that I am so keen on science classes! I spent many days at the sloughs, fishing for tadpoles and minnows, throwing rocks to examine the algae. My aunt Vi and I would go hunting in the early spring for pussy willows and bird's nests. I would go out in the rain and dig for earthworms, selling them to my uncle Albert for his fish. I definitely got an early start on being a scientist!

I played soccer in Alcomdale for a few years, as my parents were instrumental members of the Community League that began the soccer program. I also helped my mom and grandma with the Alcomdale Fall Supper, which still happens today. Currently, I still return from my home in Leduc to St. Charles Parish to teach Confirmation preparation and to enjoy pancake breakfasts.

In April 2006, I graduated from the University of Alberta with my Bachelor of Education degree. It was a long road for both Mom and I, but we came through with flying colors! I am currently teaching in Ponoka, passing on my love of science to the next generations.

Summer 2007 brought many changes to my life. The past remains the way it is but on July 1, 2007, I

was married to my Ryan. We are excited about the future and what it will hold for us. We look forward to many afternoons spent at Mom and Dad's. As Ryan says, "You can always count on two things in Alcomdale – great families and an awesome home cooked meal!"

Today, we still return home on a regular basis. The main excuse is for Ryan and I to visit our puppy, Finnigan, who lives with my parents, but we both know that there's more to it. Alcomdale is where my roots are and it gives Ryan and I the opportunity to re-focus ourselves and remind ourselves that the country is where we want to end up. Every spring I get the desire to go trudging in the puddles in my rain boots. I now have three young nieces and I relish in watching them explore this town as my brother and I once did. Many people ask me where Alcomdale is and why they've never heard of it. I like to think that we're one of Alberta's best kept secrets. I hope that this tiny town is around for many more generations to discover the joys of small-town life.

Remillard, Maurice & Del

By Maurice Remillard

I was born in Legal and Del Riopel was born in Vimy. We were married in Vimy on August 4, 1952.

We first lived in Chauvin, Alberta from 1952 to 1960. I was working for National Grain at the time and I got transferred to Radville, Saskatchewan. I bought grain there until 1974.

We moved back to the Legal area where I owned mail trucks for a while.

We then owned Artistic Landscapes for five years. Later we bought a store and post office in Alcomdale in 1980. I was asked by some citizens to put my name in for municipal councillor and I won



Maurice and Del Remillard

the election. I was a councillor in Sturgeon for 12 years.

We had shut the store down in 1983 due to Del's health but we kept the post office until 1990.

We had a family of seven children: Donald, Robert, Gisèle and Norman were born in Wainwright and Paul, Luke and Monique were born in Radville, Saskatchewan. We also have ten grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

I retired in 1992 from the Sturgeon Municipal Council and Del passed away in 1996. I now live in Edmonton in a senior citizen home.

Ricard, Emile & Therèse

By the Ricard family

Often people think of history as the great events that are said to shape the world; great discoveries and inventions, disasters and politics. However, it cannot be overlooked that the daily events that shape each individual's life are equally important. It is these ordinary details that define a family. A generation and a community ultimately create a history that is truly real and charts the course of the world. These are stories from the Ricard family and some of the things that defined the world for their family.

Home, Farming and Family

Joseph and Rosanna Ricard arrived in the Mearns area in 1911 and purchased their first parcel of land just east of the current parish church. Ten of the eleven Ricard children were born and raised on this site. Aline was the firstborn in 1913, followed by George, Alice, Alba, Emile, Camille, Laurier, Eugene, Raymond and Noel in 1928. It was not without its challenges as the first home burned to the ground. A second home was built on the same land to accommodate the large farming family. Additionally, the family owned a store on the farm

site to provide goods to neighbours and supplement the family income.

1930 saw the family on the move. Joseph and Roseanna Ricard donated land so that St. Charles Parish could build the new church, which presently remains. This was an indication of the importance of the church to the family. In doing so, the family moved to a new farm site at NE 28-56-26-4, comprised of approximately five quarters of land. It included mixed farming of grain, cattle, pigs, sheep, chickens and turkeys.

Since farming was the lifeblood of the Ricard family, everything to do with getting the farm up and running took precedence. This included moving three granaries before building the house. Furthermore, the family lived in the granaries while



Joseph & Rosanna Ricard's family taken at Joseph's funeral. L to R: Rosanna, Aline (Ricard) Paré, George, Alice (Ricard) Lecavalier, Alba (Ricard) Bourbonnais, Emile, Father Alcidas Ricard (uncle), Laurier, Camille, Therese (Ricard) Williams, Raymond, Eugene and Noel



Joseph & Rosanna (Houle) Ricard – donated the land to build the present St. Charles Borromeo Church in 1930



Wedding photo of Emile and Therese Ricard – July 4, 1945. Back row L to R: Joseph & Rosanna Ricard, Joseph and Merie St. Laurent. Front row: Raymond Ricard, Emile Ricard & Therese St. Laurent, Cecilia Sylvestre

the house was being built. Add to that the arrival of baby Theresa in 1930 – born in the granary!

Farming is a family business and the farmhouse anchored the Ricards. In 1945 Emile Ricard married Therese St. Laurent. The young seventeen-year-old bride moved to Mearns (from the big centre of Morinville) and joined the Ricard clan. It was not unusual at that time to move in with in-laws and four of your husband's siblings, however it certainly could be overwhelming and a little frightening. Ten to twelve hungry farmers at every meal made for much work for a young bride. To top it off, in 1945 the house had neither electricity nor indoor plumbing.

Two years later in 1947, Joseph and Rosanna moved to the Yakima valley permanently with the hopes that the gentler climate would alleviate some of his health difficulties related to asthma. Joseph kept busy working in hop machines. To maintain the farm, Raymond, Camille, Emile and Therese stayed behind. They also spent winters in lumber camps to make ends meet. Larry, Raymond, Noel and their sister Therese also migrated to the Yakima area in the following years and raised their families there. Camille left the farm to move to Edmonton in 1969. Imagine living with your brother-in-law for the first twenty-three years of your marriage!

The newlyweds, Emile and Therese, were soon greeted by the stork with Lorraine's arrival in 1946. Three more girls followed with Adele in 1948, JoAnne in 1949 and Dolores in 1951. The boys, Guy in 1956 and Jim in 1960 completed the newest generation of the Ricard farm family. The children helped out doing numerous farm chores and were rewarded with rides on the combine. Fun included sitting in the truck box while it was being filled up with grain! For the children this was exciting and dare devilish, and surprisingly no one was hurt.

When Emile and Therese celebrated twenty-five years of marriage in 1970, the farm was also sold to the Hutterite colony. A small family cannot farm such a large amount of land and the times were changing.

By that time, several grandchildren were present, with many more to come. Eventually they totaled twelve: Paul Jr., Cary, Sylvianne, Sherri-Lynn, Denise, Gerry, Kelly, Allison, Robert, AJ, Brianne and Gary. They spent countless hours and weekends out at the farm along with their parents. The table kept growing as plates were added and Theresa kept on cooking!

Church and Community

St. Charles Parish was the focal point of the family's life. It went far beyond Sunday Mass. The Church was the anchor of the community and an

escape from the very difficult and unchanging daily routines of farming.



Lorraine, Adele, Joanne, Dolores, Guy & Jim – Easter 1961

Every Sunday the family dressed in their very best and went to church. The boys, Guy and Jim served Mass. Singing in the choir was a highlight for Therese, and the girls followed suit as soon as they were old enough. Their beautiful voices harmonized and filled the church with joy and devotion. Sunday was a day of rest and the Mearns families would get together and visit. It was a time to share news and companionship and provide the support that was fundamental to the farming community.

Lent was a special time for the Ricard girls, who along with the Sheehan and Pelletier girls, attended church daily for forty days. In those days a hat was a requirement when one attended church. In the melee of getting to church, occasionally hats would be forgotten at home. It was not unusual to observe one of the Ricard girls with a folded Kleenex bobby pinned to her hair, hoping no one would notice.

Entertainment

In June the family eagerly awaited the church picnic and chicken supper. This was always a very special day. The men challenged one another in horseshoe tournaments and Emile served up some fierce competition. One highlight included the concession where treats could be purchased. The children enjoyed several kinds of races and the friendly competition of a ball game gave bragging

rights to the winners for the entire year. The Ricard girls' ball team, in their matching uniforms, gave other teams a run for their money! Of course the ladies of the church spent many hours preparing food and the church basement was the hub of delicious activity.

November's big event was the Church supper and Bazaar. The Ricard children would be excited for days in anticipation of the fantastic meal, including the wonderful pie table! Everyone enjoyed watching the children put on concerts and then taking home an item from the Bazaar.

One summer Therese took all of her children and the four younger Pelletier children to Lac La Nonne for a couple of weeks. She had rented a cabin and everyone enjoyed lots of water, lots of games and lots of fun. Neighbors even provided fresh fish for dinner on some of the nights! Emile would come down a couple of the times during the week to enjoy the lake as well.

Celebrations

Some of the biggest social events of the day centered around birthday parties. The Ricard children would always have at least eighteen to twenty guests – the Sheehans, Pelletiers and Nobert girls could always be counted on to attend. Favourite games included Kick the Can, Red Rover, Anti-I-Over, Red Light Green Light and Hide & Seek. Even just playing in the barn and climbing trees would entertain everyone for hours. Imagination, not cash, fuelled the entertainment. Hungry tummies would delight in home made buns, cinnamon rolls, birthday cake and the best Ricard farm "soda water" – kool-aid.

School

Emile and Therese's children had the good fortune of living within walking distance of the school. However, even in the dead of winter when the temperature reached -40° and the buses were not running, they went to school. The merciless weather was less than pleasant for the little girls who could not wear anything but dresses and skirts to school. It was much more fun in milder weather walking along the railway tracks with the Sheehan and Pelletier girls. It's a wonder anyone made it to school!

The Ricard children enjoyed the nuns, who were the teachers. While they were strict, as was the order of the day, they were helpful and even fun educators who ensured they used their pointers (Sister Petra's) and drilled those times tables into the students. School was not all hard work though. There were always plays, festivals and concerts to prepare for as well. Recess saw the children playing organized games of dodge ball and pump-pump pull-away or

skating on the bumpy skating rink in winter. And one can never forget the excitement of who was going to clean the chalkboard erasers. Really. It was a privilege!

Reciting "Our Father" every morning was a part of the daily school routine. On one such occasion, it was more than a little embarrassing for Adele Ricard. During the recitation, the children behind her began to stifle giggles. When she looked down, her skirt had slipped off onto the floor because a button had popped. This was pure humiliation for a fifth grade student in a garter belt, which coincidentally was also hanging on with only a button.

In typical fashion, the children would often trade their lunches. The Ricard children would give away their mother's homemade buns and cinnamon rolls for the treat of white store bought bread and cookies. Who got the better deal?

Home Life

The John Deere tractor with the flat rack trailer was put to work on a frequent basis. The Ricard children would spend the entire day picking up roots and rocks in the fields, pausing to have a lunch of buns and quart jars of kool-aid. Occasionally the tractor would even be used for fun excursions to the dump. Lorraine would pull the flat rack loaded with junk and stop at all of the neighbours and the kids would add their stuff to the pile. Then all the "town" kids would sit around the edges of the trailer with their legs dangling while Lorraine slowly drove to the dump. After the flat rack was unloaded, everyone would go searching for the "treasure" other people left behind.

Guy and Jim, although younger than their very social sisters, found plenty to entertain themselves as well. Along with the Schafers, DeRudders and Girards, they would build tree houses and go-carts. Summer days were spent swimming in dugouts and winter days involved hours on the ice, skating and playing hockey.

The Ricards were one of the first Mearns families to get a television in 1957. Of course, this led to lots of company. The living room saw several friends and family members sitting on the floor, usually eating Therese's goodies and sipping the famous Ricard kool-aid. Some of the favourite programs of the day included The Walt Disney Show, I Love Lucy, The Ed Sullivan Show, The Honeymooners and The George Burns and Gracie Allen Show.

Living with a large family had its advantages; there were always jobs to do. Uncle Camille, as he was known to Therese and Emile's children, would let them polish his shoes. For this task he would give

them money to spend at the Sheehan store. At the time a bottle of pop and a chocolate bar cost \$.25, and certainly was a treat. Uncle Camille had shiny shoes!

The very large garden provided the family with hours of “entertainment” – weeding, tending and harvesting. The fresh vegetables were a treat in summer, and were enjoyed throughout the year by means of canned beans, pickles and preserves.

Therese was known throughout the community as the French Braid expert. Little girls from near and far would get their very tight, scalp-pulling rows of braids and they would last for days. The tradition continued with not only her grandchildren, but the great-grandchildren too!

Challenges

Sunday church services required that everyone be shiny and scrubbed, pressed and polished. Preparation began long before anyone stepped foot in the church. Saturday night saw the ritual of the family bath – that’s right – one tub of water for everyone. Water was even hauled by hand from outside until cold water was piped to the kitchen in 1949. A big tank was installed in the upstairs room with a tap to the kitchen. After it was heated, everyone would pick toothpicks to determine the bathing order. Would the last bather be cleaner after the fact?

Laundry was done by hand with the wringer washer, white dresses meticulously pressed and four little pairs of girls’ white shoes were polished until gleaming. Even each person’s sole pair of shoelaces had to be washed the night before church. All this work was worth it when the family took their place in the family church pew with a sense of pride.

It is often said that it takes a community to raise a child. Farm families looked out for one another, and children knew that they had the support (and watchful eye) of more than their immediate family. In the community of Mearns, this was especially true when tragedy struck. When Barbara Pelletier passed away, Therese would often welcome the four to six Pelletier children into the fold for meals and sometimes hosted their birthday parties. The five Sheehan girls lost their father Dan, and mother Catherine within one year. The Ricards considered these children as part of their family

too, and still do.

Moving From Mearns

The Ricard farmhouse is celebrating its 75th Anniversary. In fact ten acres were purchased back from the Hutterites. While only Therese lives there now, the children and even grandchildren still call it home. Although it hasn’t served as a source of income since 1971, it will always be known as “the farm”.

Lorraine married Paul Clausen in 1966 and lived in Edmonton, Ft. McMurray, Spruce Grove and St. Albert until she passed away in 1988. Paul remarried Ruth and they currently reside in Vancouver.

Adele married Tim Auger in 1968 and after a brief time living in Mearns they moved on to live in Edmonton, St. Albert and Leduc where they currently reside.

Jo-Anne married Allan Tremblay in 1968 and lived in Edmonton, Fahler, Mearns and Spruce Grove where they currently reside.

Dolores married Gerald McLennan in 1972 and lived in various areas including White Horse, Langley, B.C., and Morinville where they currently reside.

Guy married Kathryn Boytzun in 1992 and lived in Edmonton, St. Albert and Powell River, B.C. where they currently reside.

Jim married Dolores Caouette in 1983 and lived in Mearns and Morinville where they currently reside.

The grandchildren are scattered across Canada: in Morinville, Half-Moon Lake, Edmonton, Stony Plain, Spruce Grove, Beaumont, Vancouver and Moncton. Who knows where the great-grandchildren will go?



Theresa & Emile Ricard Family – on Emile’s 80th Birthday – Gerry McLennan, Guy Ricard, Kathryn Ricard, Therese Ricard, Jim Ricard, Dolores Ricard, Allan & JoAnne (Ricard) Tremblay, Dolores (Ricard) McLennan, Emile Ricard, Adele (Ricard) Auger, Tim Auger



Paul and Lorraine (Ricard) Clausen and family



Tim and Adele (Ricard) Auger and family



Allan and Joanne (Ricard) Tremblay and family



Guy and Kathryn Ricard, October 8, 1992



Gerry and Dolores (Ricard) McLennan and family



Jim and Dolores Ricard and family

Riopel, Roland & Raymonde (Perras)

By Jeanne (Riopel) Nash

In 1892, Jean Baptiste L'Hirondelle homesteaded the land described as W½- 26- 56-26-W4. This farmland is located four miles north and four and a half miles west of Morinville. A log house and a barn were built of logs felled from the property. Part of the log house still stands today.



Original farmhouse built of logs in the 1890's and years later covered with siding. Flora Perras is standing in front of the house with her flowers

Jean Baptiste's daughters, one of whom was Flora, inherited the land and soon Flora became the sole proprietor. She married Victor Perras, brother to J. H. Perras (Joe). The couple lived on the farm and raised four sons: Robert, Ernest, Maurice and Raymond. In the early years, they farmed with horses. Victor raised horses, broke them and sold them. Oats and barley were the main crops and hay was grown in the lowland. For many years, sheep were also raised. Raymonde Riopel remembers that their mother would wash the wool after the sheep were sheared and then it was hung on the picket fence and left to dry. Even after the wool was washed, it still had an unpleasant odor. Once the wool was dry, Raymonde and her siblings would help card it. Some of it was used to make quilts and mattresses and the remainder was bagged in large gunnysacks and sold.

Many gatherings were held on the farm for family and friends. Flora would prepare a feast of wild duck, shot on a slough on the farm, and prepared large quantities of fresh garden vegetables. It was a real treat for everyone.

Joe Perras purchased the land in the early twenties, however, Victor and Flora farmed it until they retired and purchased a home in Morinville in 1951. Victor passed away in 1961. Flora then moved to St. Albert where she resided until her death in 1975.

In 1951, Roland Riopel took over the farm. He was a son-in-law to Joe Perras and husband to



Victor Perras and his bride, Flora L'Hirondelle

Raymonde Perras. "Rolly" assumed the responsibility to farm, not only the two homesteaded quarters, but also three to five other rented quarters of land. All of this land was farmed with a minimum of equipment, two Cockshutt 50 tractors and ten-foot cultivators. He was 31 at the time and would devote the remainder of his life to the land he came to love.

Roland made many improvements over the years. The land, at that time, still consisted of large areas of bush that needed to be cleared. Countless hours were spent picking roots and rocks by hand. He also put up many buildings: a garage that doubled as a workshop, a large granary and a machine shed. He planted a shelterbelt consisting of hundreds of trees, maple, ash, willow, spruce and elm. A cow herd of 80 required that a large perimeter of land be fenced. Rolly would drive up north during the winter months to purchase tamarack rails for fence posts. The posts would be cut to length and the bark was removed by hand with a drawknife. Finally, the posts were sharpened with a belt-driven circular saw. All the fence posts were pounded by hand with a sledgehammer.

Another major project for Rolly was the construction of a feedlot in the sixties. The feedlot consisted of nine acres, divided into seven corrals, complete with electric waterers. A lot of hard work was involved in caring for the livestock. Every year,



Flora Perras (Victor's wife) and her four sons: Robert, Ernest, Maurice and Raymond in 1964

Rolly had the arduous task of dehorning, branding, vaccinating and castrating the cattle. Without modern equipment, this proved to be a challenge.

The winter season brought changes in Rolly's daily routine. In the fall, he baled more hay and straw than needed and even purchased additional feed from other farmers. Through the winter months, he hauled and sold the surplus to Edmonton stockyards. He also trucked his entire cow-calf herd to a feedlot just outside of Morinville and hauled all the feed required for the herd. The feed was handled manually in the form of square bales.

During this time, Rolly would also prepare the calves for market by feeding them grain until they reached their finished weight. Rolly's children

belonged to the local 4-H Beef Club and Rolly was very involved in helping them select their calves from the existing herd.

In the mid seventies, the government allowed Australian beef into Canada, which depressed Canadian prices for several years. Because of his age and the physical demands of keeping a herd, as well as the depressed cattle prices, Roland sold his entire herd. At that point, he farmed only grain and oil seeds. Rolly actively farmed the land until he passed away in 1993 at the age of 73.

Since then, Roland's son, Bob, his wife, Bernice, and their three children, Nicole, Reece and Jacqueline have resided on the home quarter. Bob has continued to farm the land and has since started his own cowherd. The entire family continues to enjoy the peaceful surroundings that their rural environment provides.

Bob and his family are proud recipients of the Alberta Century Farm and Ranch Award. This government award, which salutes the enduring contribution made by farm families, recognizes those who have toiled with courage and determination from one generation to the next over a period of one hundred years or more. In this instance, the four generations of farmers have, collectively, made farming a family tradition for 115 years.



"Wild Duck Feed" at the home of Victor Perras. This took place once a year and all the Perras families were invited. This photo was taken in 1935



Joseph H. Perras and his bride Rose-Anna Huot were married on April 16, 1918 in Morinville's St. Jean Baptiste Church. Jos Perras was a prominent businessman in Morinville for many years



Roland and Raymonde Perras were married on November 18, 1946 at Morinville's St. Jean Baptiste Church. Both are descendants of Morinville pioneers



Robert and Bernice Riopel with their three children: Jacqueline, Reece and Nicole. Reece graduated as an Edmonton Firefighter in May 2007



The family of Roland and Raymonde Riopel on the occasion of their daughter Suzanne's wedding on May 8, 1993. Sitting: Jeanne Nash, Suzanne and Larry Farrell, Roland and Rita Riopel. Standing: Robert, Raymonde and Paul Riopel

Rottot, Arthur & Rosalie

By Denise Lirondelle (Rottot)



Arthur Rottot & Rosalie Maréchal

Arthur Rottot was the son of Dr. Jean Philippe Rottot and Sara O'Leary of Montreal. He had left home at an early age following his mother's death and his father's second marriage to a widow with children. He arrived in the Egg Lake area via the United States where he had worked at many types of jobs.

Rosalie (nee Marechal) was the daughter of Pascal Marechal and Archange (Eva) Belcourt. Archange was the widow of Jean Baptiste Short. Archange and Jean had four children: Justine, Caroline, Marie and John.

Arthur and Rosalie's family consisted of four girls and one boy: Sara Brown of Raymond, Washington; Wilfred (unmarried and now deceased); Alma Lyall of Tacoma, Washington; Denise Lirondelle and Ida Leblanc of Morinville.

Arthur and Rosalie farmed in the Egg Lake area until his death in 1942. Rosalie passed away in 1962 and both are buried in the Mearns Catholic Cemetery.

Mrs. Rottot was known throughout the Mearns district as the local midwife and "doctor" and many



The Rottot house – 1949



Rosalie Rottot

of the conversations and stories that came up in the creation of this book included her name and her good works.

A Letter from Arthur Rottot to his father, July 4, 1889

(translated from French to English)

Helena 4th July 1889

Dear Father,

Although it has been a long time without putting pen to paper, today I have the pleasure to send you a line as I have a full leisure day.

I left Butt City and I am presently in Helena City where I work a couple of miles away from town on the Hot Spring construction project on the Kansas plan. We are nearly 600 workers on site.

I was very happy to find work this spring. It has given me a chance to live till now as I left Butt on foot and arrived in Helena with 25 francs. I have been here since the 15th of April and I do not owe a cent to anyone.

My savings are not great due to the fact that it is difficult to live here for less than a dollar a day, without taking into account the cost of washing etc. So you can see one has to work long hours and continuously in order to reach one's goal.

I believe that the work will soon run out at the Springs, I hope to find some work somewhere else. There is a lot of money in this country but the immigration is very strict.

People speculate on land prices but there has not been a boom yet! It is very much the fever of the North West that one can sense.

If only I could get some land in town or close to it. It would be my making. Rents return good profits,

as much as \$245.00 per month, I could also get around \$14 in Montreal.

My pay is \$2.25 per day, I have not worked long at this rate, here we have worker's protection, unions etc. I have worked for a dollar a day.

Could you please convey my regards to Madame Rottot.

I remain your devoted son.

Helena City
Box 51 Mont Terr
U.S.

medicine in Lower Canada. His skill was exerted freely among a large proportion of French-Canadian families.

Rottot was a fine diagnostician and he was greatly in demand as a consultant. He formulated valuable definitions of illness and inflammations. A keen interest in his patients and their welfare was evidenced throughout his entire life and the poor were numbered among his patients. His appearance gave the impression of well-directed force, health and cheerfulness.

One of the aims of Rottot's life was to teach medicine and this was realized through his membership in l'Ecole de Medicine et Chirurgie de Montreal, the first French Medical School established in Montreal. In 1878, when a Montreal branch of Laval University was formed, Rottot severed his connection with the Montreal School of Medicine and Surgery and accepted a professorship in the new Faculty or Succursale, as it was known. In this institution he taught Internal Medicine and headed the medical clinic, and when the School of Medicine and Surgery and the Succursale were united, Rottot was appointed Dean of the Faculty of Medicine.

Rottot was one of the founders and directors of Notre Dame Hospital, doctor of St. Sulpice Seminary and of the Grey Sisters. His interest in medicine was not entirely local and he was active in the Canadian Medical Association. Being of a studious nature his talents were directed into journalistic channels and he was the first director-general of the Union Medicale. Due to his wise guidance, this publication survived its first few years.

A man who lived unpretentiously and shunned publicity, Rottot's contribution to medical history is an honourable one. He died in 1910 leaving a rich legacy of medical knowledge to his followers. The record of his professional activities encourages William R. Warner & Company in its policy of Therapeutic Exactness... Pharmaceutical Excellence.

Sabourin Ovila & Alma

By Yvonne Kluthe (Sabourin)

Ovila Sabourin was born in 1903, the eldest son of Adrian Sabourin and Rose Remillard, a pioneer farm family in the Morinville area. He received a grade nine education, which was above average for those years. He could read French as well as English and was an excellent speller. Ovila would have liked to go into business but his dad insisted he go into farming. He had started to purchase a farm from Luxon Lirondelle, one and a half miles east of

FATHERS OF CANADIAN MEDICINE
ONE OF A SERIES



Jean Philippe Rottot M.D.
1825-1910

SYMPATHY, kindness, modesty, politeness... these qualities attracted people to Jean Philippe Rottot. Born at L'Assomption, P.Q., he received his degree in 1847 and for sixty-three years practised medicine in Lower Canada. His skill was exerted freely among a large proportion of French-Canadian families.

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Photocopy of write up on Jean Philippe Rottot

Article on Arthur's father, Jean Philippe Rottot

Taken from Manufacturing Pharmacutists, titled Fathers of Canadian Medicine *one of a series.

Jean Philippe Rottot M.D., 1825-1910

Sympathy, kindness, modesty, politeness... these qualities attracted people to Jean Philippe Rottot. Born at L'Assomption, P.Q., he received his degree in 1847 and for sixty-three years practiced



The Ovila Sabourin Family – circa early 1960's. Standing L to R: Marguerite, Blanche, John Louis, Yvonne, Lionel, Simonne, Paul, Madeleine, Rita. Seated: Ovila, Lucille, Angele, Mathias, Alma



The Sabourin Family – circa mid 1990's. Standing L to R: John Louis, Madeleine, Mathias, Angele, Paul, Lionel. Seated: Yvonne, Blanche, Lucille, Marguerite, Rita, Simonne

Mearns. The farm was bought in 1927 and he batched until his marriage to Alma Simon in November 1928. There were twelve children born of this union.

- Angele Sabourin, born in 1929, was responsible for the children who came after her. Angele married Norman Casavant and they had four children.
- Blanche also helped with the children and with many of the chores. She married Camille Boissonnault and they had five children. At age 34 Camille passed away and Blanche later married Ambrose Ricard. They had one son George.
- John Louis married Muriel Borle and they had three children and reside in St. Albert.
- Yvonne married John Joseph Kluthe and they had six children and farmed in the Mearns area until his passing in 1998. Yvonne continues to live on the farm.
- Paul married Julliette Williams and they had three sons and live in Millwoods.
- Rita married Gilbert Soetaert, a farmer from the Villeneuve area, and they had four children.
- Madeleine married Lloyd Gilmour. They lived in Calgary, had three sons, and are now living in Spruce Grove.
- Lionel married Sylvia Brown. They had three children and Lionel lives in Edmonton.
- Marguerite married Wesley LaFleur. They had two children and live in Spruce Grove.
- Mathias married Sheila McLeod and they had two children. He later married Vicky Zenner. They had four children and currently reside in Grande Prairie.

- Simonne married Stan Jackson and they had two children. Simonne resides in Calgary.
- Lucille married Tom Turner. They had five children and currently live in Vimy.

Alma, the anchor of the family, was able to make this work. She milked the cows, baked for the large family, disciplined the children, and sewed their clothes. Sunday morning started with Church. Sunday afternoons were spent playing ball with the neighbors, as well as “kick the can”. There were always chores for the whole family like picking stones and roots in the fields, milking cows, baking bread, and much more. The farm was sold in 1965 when Alma and Ovila moved to St. Albert. Ovila passed away in 1968. Alma passed away in 1993.

Schafers, Henry & Emma

By the Family

Once upon a time, across the pond in Germany, the Schafer family and the Hesse family decided to make a new home in Canada.

The Hesse family settled in the Busby area on the same spot they call the Ponderosa today. Frank, one of the sons, married a young Saskatchewan girl by the name of Agnes Jansen whose family also immigrated to Canada. They began their own family in Morinville where Emma arrived, the first of six children.

Young John Schafers settled in the Morinville area and found himself a bride. Her name was Dianna deTonnancour, also of immigrant ancestry. They farmed about two miles southwest of

Morinville and began their family, of which Henry was the fourth of seven children.

As the Hesse family grew they moved to the St. Leon area, which is now near the 137th Avenue and St. Albert Trail intersection. They provided a safe nights lodging for travellers at the Trail Inn Auto Court Cabins.

As luck would have it, both Henry, 29, and Emma, 23, loved to dance and would frequent the community dances in St. Albert and before you knew it, the sound of wedding bells were in the air.

They lived on the home place just outside of Morinville in a bunkhouse for the first six years of their marriage. Three babies later, it was time to make a move to larger quarters and a farm of their own.

In the summer of 1957, Henry and Emma purchased the Bray brothers farm, which is four miles northeast of Mearns. At the time it was being rented by Eddie and Alice Vandenhouten. Eddie and Alice later bought the adjacent farm and the families remain lifelong friends to this day.

This very special community quickly became home for Henry and Emma and their six children, Ruth, Marie (Pinky), Debbie, Frank, Gene and Joyce.

Five of the children attended the small country school of St. Charles in Mearns where the School Sisters of Notre Dame taught before the school was closed. The children were then bussed to Camilla in Riviere Qui Barre. The time at St. Charles would have a lifelong impact on the children and would be a source of strength for the years and events to come.

In 1973 the family increased by one. Manfred Hesse, Mom's first cousin, had lost both his mother and father by the age of 11 and when asked where he wanted to live he said “with Henry Schafers family in Canada”. A period of adjustment began for all of us. He, going from being an only child to one of seven and we, adjusting to a new brother. Sadly, Manfred passed away in Calgary in November 2002.

The children grew, got married and they all had babies. Ruth to Bill McLellan, Debbie to Brian Mitchell, Frank to Rena Keilor, Gene to Elaine Dubord and Joyce to Jamie MacDonald. In May of 1986 tragedy struck this close knit family and began what felt like a domino effect.

On the sunny Sunday morning of May 25, 1986 a previous neighbour murdered Marie (Pinky) in her St. Albert home. She had been viciously stabbed to death. In September 1987 Deb and Brian lost their fourth child, Davie, after several surgeries due to heart-lung complications at six months old. Then, on a warm September 14, 1990, Henry came home



Henry and Emma (Hesse) Schafers on their honeymoon



Marie (Pinky) Schafers – circa 1980's

from a visit to the doctor, lay down and died of congestive heart failure, which had been mistaken for pneumonia. They say what doesn't kill you makes you stronger. They're right.

Being the typical matriarch, Emma remained on the farm, always providing that safe, secure home where one can go and find rest

for body and soul. Sadly, Emma passed away after a battle with kidney disease on January 10, 2006. Through the years the kids and their families all found their way back home.

Ruth, who's husband Bill died in August 2004, lives in Legal and works at the John Paul II Bible School in Radway and one day a week works at the Spa she and a partner used to own in Morinville. Her kids see their world as a treasure waiting to be explored... and they are.



L to R: Deb's daughters, Jenny, Amy and Brandi with Joyce Schafers holding a new generation of Schafers

Deb lives on the farm and is a long time familiar face at the Sturgeon Community Health Centre in the Emergency department. Being the extensive globetrotter she is, she has grandchildren in Mearns, St. Albert and Amsterdam, Holland. Our grandparents globetrotting gene did not skip this generation or the next.

Frank and Rena and family live in St. Albert. Frank is a consultant for Brown and Root in Fort Saskatchewan and no doubt counts the minutes till he and family can once again play out at their lake lot in LacLaBiche. Rena is a Dental Hygienist and a Professor of Dental Hygiene at the U of A. Their girls are great lovers of sports and music, like Mom and Dad.

Gene and Elaine and family live just outside of

St. Albert along the mighty Sturgeon, now famous I'm sure as "the best place to party." They own Kodiak Wireline Services in Morinville. The kids inherited their grandpa Schafers crazy gene as did their dad. Never a dull moment there, just ask Elaine.

Joyce and Jamie also live on the farm with their children. Joyce has written and published two children's books along with a corresponding CD composed and sung by Jamie. Jamie is off to Nashville in the very near future to follow his dream as a singer songwriter. Their children are, as are all the grandchildren & great grandchildren, the treasure of our hearts.

And did they all live happily ever after? Probably not, but laughter and the joy gene run deep and long in our family and God is good.



Ruth Schafers and Debbie Mitchell with Fr. Niel Vaney at Catholic Discipleship College in new Zealand in March 2007. Ruth works at the College and Debbie is a student there.



Emma Schafers and her family in photo taken in 1998. Back row, L to R: Gene, Debbie, Frank. Front row, L to R: Ruth, Emma and Joyce



Henry Schafers in photo taken in 1985 on his horse 'Babe'

Schnirer, Arvin & Jeannette

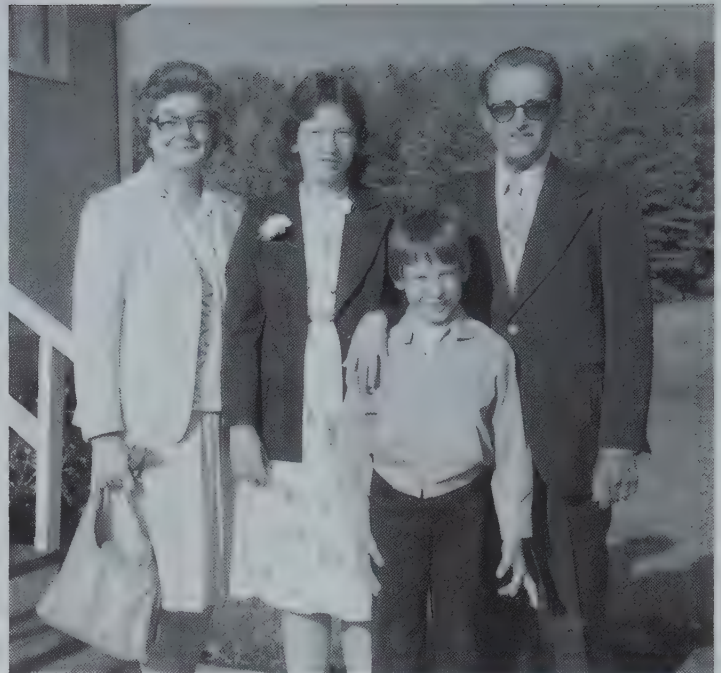
By Jeannette Schnirer

Arvin and Jeannette have been part of the Busby and Mearns church communities for many years. Arvin's parents, Egnac and Julia Schnirer, moved to the Busby area in 1948 with their four children, Willy, Arvin, Rose and Otto. They became active members of St. Anthony's Church community with the boys participating as alter boys for many years.

In 1967 Arvin married Jeannette Bergevin of Legal. They were blessed with two children, Laurie and Ken. Laurie attended kindergarten in Mearns under the leadership of Louise Brenneis. Ken and



Dr. Laurie, Arvin, Jeannette (Jenny) & Ken Schnirer



Dorothy and Tom Logan attended the Confirmation of their Godchild, Laurie Schnirer. From L to R: Dorothy Logan, Laurie Schnirer, Ken Schnirer, Tom Logan



Laurie Ann Schnirer – First Communion Day, May 16, 1976

Laurie attended catechism in Busby and Legal. They both received the sacraments in Busby except for Laurie's Confirmation. She was the only child in Busby to be confirmed, so Sr. Andrea Hagan took her under her wing and prepared her for her Confirmation with the Mearns candidates. How she loved Sister Hagan's cookies!

Jeannette was treasurer for Busby church for several years under the leadership of Father Lavery. She also led the youth group in the 1970's, assembling in the church basements.

Jeannette and Mary Meinczinger organized many church suppers. That was our main source of fund raising for our church community.

Arvin and son, Ken, are actively farming together. Dr. Laurie received her doctorate in Ed.

Psychology and is working at the University of Alberta. Jeannette is still working at Westlock Elementary School.

After the closure of the Busby church we joined Mearns church community.

Schuster, Charles & Hannah (Lambert)

By Joan (Perron) McCallum



Four Hannah/Johannas L to R: Johanna (Schuster) Dietrich, Johanna (Schuster) Neveu, Hannah Schuster (wife of Conrad Schuster), Hannah (Lambert) Schuster



Rose, Hector, Simonne and Joan Perron

Charles was born in Austria on October 15, 1871. Hannah was born on a farm near Waunakee, Wisconsin on May 20, 1881. They were married in Redfield, South Dakota on March 17, 1900. They moved to Canada where they farmed at Mearns, Alberta for many years.

Charles died of a heart attack at Mearns on July 27, 1943. Hannah died of constriction of the bowels after a long illness on February 24, 1956 at St. Albert. They are buried in St. Albert.

They had eight children who were born in Mearns:

- Wenzel Shuster was born on February 14, 1901 and died on May 6, 1903.
- Charles Schuster, Jr. was born on September 10, 1902 and died on April 12, 1903.
- Joseph Michael Schuster was born on January 29, 1904 and died on June 15, 1977 in Westlock. He married Marguerite Toupin of Westlock.
- Michael Conrad Schuster was born on March 1, 1906 and died on July 18, 1906.
- Johanna Walburga Schuster was born on November 13, 1908 and died on September 10, 1979 in Edmonton. She married Joseph Neveu on July 23, 1930 and they had two children, Fredrick Charles Neveu and Donald Joseph Neveu.
- Anthony Conrad Schuster was born on August 21, 1911 and died on April 4, 1912.
- Francis Schuster was born on October 1, 1912 and died in February 1994. He married Jessie Annie Grey on February 6, 1934 and they had two children, Francis Thomas Schuster and Rose Marie Johannah Schuster.
- Rose Lillian Caroline Schuster was born on February 20, 1916 and died on November 27, 2000. She married Hector Perron on September 23, 1941 and they had two daughters Joan Marie Perron and Simonne Rose Perron.



Family of Hannah and Charles Schuster in photo taken in 1975. L to R: Johanna (Schuster) Neveu, Joe, Rose (Schuster) Perron, and Francis



Front L to R: Rose and Hector Perron, Don England, Jason Weir, Glen England, Ronald and Vera Neveu, Rosemary England, Jessie Schuster. Back Row L to R: Hilda England, Ian England, Doug and Marie England, Andy England, Ron McCollum, Francis and Tom Schuster, Fred Neveu

Seib, Herbert & Martha

By Anita (Seib) Vest



Herbert and Martha Seib – Feb. 14, 1952

Herbert and Martha Seib were both born in Poland of German heritage. Herbert was born on February 23, 1919 and moved to the Barrhead area with his parents in 1930. He farmed in that area until 1963. Martha was born April 2, 1926 and moved to the Barrhead area with her parents in 1948. Herbert and Martha met through mutual friends and were married on February 14, 1952.

While they lived in Barrhead they had two children, Anita born July 17, 1953 and Gerald Herbert born January 8, 1956. They moved to Edmonton in 1958 where their third child, Rita Rose, was born on May 31, 1962. While living and working in Edmonton they still farmed the land they owned in the Barrhead area until 1963. Herbert and Martha decided they weren't born to live in the city so they sold their house in Edmonton and the farm in Barrhead and relocated to the farm one mile west of Alcomdale (SE 1-57-27-W4th) in 1963. They purchased a half section of land from Robert and Martha Galbz.

Herbert and Martha had relatives and friends living in Edmonton that enjoyed coming out to the farm for visits, great meals and to help with the harvest. As farm machinery got bigger and more automated, they no longer needed the help with harvest but still enjoyed visiting with relatives and

friends. When Gerald got older and was able to help on the farm, Herbert and Martha decided they could farm more land so they purchased their neighbour's farm (Walter Kopec) when he retired in 1975.

Herbert did not retire from the farm. His hobby was farming, as was his career. He passed away of cancer on April 17, 1988 at the age of 69. Martha still resides on the south half section of SW 1-57-27-W4th, which is part of the farm they purchased from Walter Kopec. At 79 she still keeps a weedless garden, has flowerbeds galore and maintains an immaculate yard and house. It is not easy to catch her in the house as she is always out in the yard working on one project or another. There are many 29 year olds that would have trouble keeping up to her.

Anita attended Alcomdale School until Grade eight when the school closed, then went to Sir Alexander MacKenzie and Paul Kane High School in St. Albert. She participated in the Alcomdale 4-H Sewing Club, curled in the Alcomdale Curling League and was a member of the Alcomdale Teen Council. Anita married Clayton Vest of Calahoo on October 7, 1972. They live on the north half of SW 1-57-27-W4th, which is part of the farm Herbert and Martha purchased from Walter Kopec. They have two sons, Christopher Brian, born January 23, 1977, and Jason Hans, born February 18, 1980. Both Christopher and Jason attended Camilla and Sturgeon Composite High School. They enjoyed



Herbert and Martha Seib – circa 1985/86

playing baseball, soccer and hockey, as well as riding motorcycles and playing with friends and neighbours while growing up. Christopher married Cheryl Elaine Malachowski of Ardrossan on September 13, 2005 and they live in Edmonton. Jason married Laurie Ann Chandler of Morinville on June 19, 2004 and they live in Morinville.



The Seib Family – 2005. L to R: Laurie Vest, Jason Vest, Cheryl Vest, Chris Vest, Anita Vest, Clayton Vest, Martha Seib, Olive & Hans Vest, Tom Sherburne, Rita Sherburne, Gary Sherburne, Liz Seib. The children in the front row are: Zachary Sherburne, ShaeLynn Seib and Dylan Seib.

Gerald attended Alcomdale School until grade five, when he went to Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre. Gerald curled in bonspiels at the Alcomdale curling rink and enjoyed spending time with his friends, Jim Boroweicki, Blake Benson, John Domino and Lorry Cox. Gerald married Elizabeth Boroweicki of Leduc on September 5, 1987. They have two children, Shae Lynn Regina, born November 10, 1996, and Dylan Gerald, born February 23, 1998. Dylan was born on what would have been his grandfather Herbert's 79th birthday. Shae Lynn and Dylan attend Camilla School. They enjoy growing up on the farm and playing with their good friends and neighbours, Pieter and Rachel Tolsma. Gerald, Elizabeth and family still live and farm the Seib family farm.

Rita attended Camilla School until grade nine then went to Sturgeon Composite High School. Rita belonged to the Alcomdale 4-H Sewing Club, took guitar lessons from Mr. Tuckek and played on the Camilla School basketball team. Rita married Tom Sherburne of St. Albert on June 7, 1997. They have a son, Zachary, born September 20, 1998. They reside in St. Albert and make weekly trips to the farm where Zachary enjoys visits with Grandma, and his uncles, aunts and cousins.

Living in the community for over 43 years, you can't help but set down deep roots. Some of our family friendships span three generations. We have fond memories of community picnics, potluck suppers and community dances. Alcomdale is a great community to grow up in, bring a family up in and live in.

Sheehan, Dan & Catharine Family

By their daughters

We will never know what prompted our dad, Dan, to leave his job in the city and move to Mearns. He was an accountant for Canada Packers in Edmonton and our mom, Catharine, was at home with two children when the General Store in Mearns came up for sale. Dad probably saw a chance to be his own boss, so our folks bought the store from the Sagan family. We're glad they did!

It was 1947 when our family moved to Mearns. Dad was an entrepreneur. He operated the General Store, which included a Post Office, a bulk oil business and a trucking business. He also owned and drove a school bus and acted as caretaker for the school. Dad's business license read "License issued April 1, 1949 to Daniel J. Sheehan as an operator of a General Store and a retail dealer in fuel oil – one single pump at premises situated on the NE¼ sec 28-56-26-W4th". Dad was "authorized to sell car



Dan and Catharine (McGillis) Sheehan in November 1941

gas and tractor gas" which he purchased from North Star Oil.

Catharine gave real meaning to the adage, "a woman's work is never done". She was always available as the 'storekeeper'. Those duties included serving customers, stocking shelves, writing purchases in those bill books and filling gas tanks. She did all this in addition to running a household and raising their five daughters. Three more daughters were born after she and Dan moved to Mearns.

Much socializing happened on the church steps after Sunday Mass. Dad, however, could not stay around because the store was open and he had customers to serve. That must have been our busiest day. People picked up a few groceries or stopped by for a treat for the kids. Country stores really understood what 'service' meant. There were no regular hours. You opened when the customer came. Groceries were most often put "on the bill" and we never heard our parents speak about unpaid bills. When cream cheques, family allowances and grain cheques came in, bills were paid. We girls remember fondly those little bill books with the



Catharine Sheehan pumping gas at Mearns General Store

carbon sheet needing to be placed behind each page before making an entry and Mearns General Store stamped at the top. Each family's name was on an outside flap. What a way for young girls to practice their handwriting, spelling and organizing skills.

Our dad bought his first bus in 1948, the year when three schools, Tellier, Belle Valley and Egg Lake were centralized to Mearns. That first bus doubled as our motor home. Many summers that bus would undergo a conversion and head to the mountains. Some of the seats were removed in order to accommodate camp cots, card tables and chairs and, of course, the green Coleman gas stove. How we wish our parents could have lived to see present day motor homes.

Trains were a constant in our lives. There were instances of cattle or dogs being killed by freight trains traveling through the centre of town, but fortunately no village child was ever hurt. There were close calls but always those vigilant adults were watching.

Her Majesty's mail arrived on the Barrhead train every Tuesday and Friday. Mostly the train just slowed to pick up and drop off the mailbags. As the train slowed they would toss the mailbags onto the train station platform and we would toss the outgoing mailbags on to a hook that extended out of



"On a Family Camping Outing" – Janet, Judy, Catharine (holding Rita), Maureen (holding Cathy) and Dan Sheehan

the mail car. Everything from letters and parcels from the Eaton's catalogue to family allowance cheques arrived in those heavy, locked canvas bags. That train brought the outside world to our houses. As children we waved to the engineer and the fellow in the caboose. And they waved back.

Social life for adults often involved card games with neighbours; Canasta with the Kennedy's, Baruche with Albert and Blanche Wulff and Cribbage with Uncle Pete and Aunt Mary. Winters were spent curling in Alcomdale with Alan and Eunice Mills and summers were for watching your kids play ball. On hot summer days our evenings were spent at the Sturgeon River or Sandy Lake. Church picnics in the spring and suppers in the fall rounded out their social life.

People always gathered for Sunday mass. That



Dan and Catharine Sheehan and girls. Back row L to R: Judy, Catharine, Dan, Janet, Maureen. Front row L to R: Cathy, Rita

was just a given in our Catholic community. Mom was part of one of the very first Catholic Women's Leagues in Alberta. It's interesting to note that all the women were known by their husband's names... "Mrs. Dan Sheehan". The adults met in each other's homes to study Catholic Christian doctrine.



The Sheehan girls taken in 1986. Back row L to R: Cathy Judy, Rita; Front row sitting L to R: Maureen, Janet

The priests and the School Sisters of Notre Dame were such an important part of our lives. A highlight of our Christmas was first bringing flowers to decorate the crèche in the Sisters' chapel. Then, on Christmas day we would return to show off our presents and visit that chapel. The convent, the rectory and the religious who lived there played an important part in the life of Mearns.

Our dad's life ended tragically in July of 1961. Mom had already been struggling with cancer and in October of that same year she was hospitalized again. She passed away in March of 1962. It was the Mearns community that carried us through those difficult times. We will be eternally grateful to the Sisters, the Banacks, Therese Ricard, and of course Joe and Helena Kluthe who took us into their lives and their hearts.

There were many others who helped care for us because they truly were the good people of Mearns. They lived the adage 'it takes a whole village to raise a child'. We are proof of that.

Maureen (Sheehan) Sleccka

By Maureen Sleccka

Mearns is where my memories begin. I was four years old when my mom and dad moved there to operate the Mearns General Store. Our lives revolved around that store, St. Charles Church and the school.

How lucky we were to grow up surrounded by good people. As village kids we always had lots of playmates. Those nightly ball games by the railroad track with the Pelletiers and Ricards were great fun. Everyone played; no one was excluded because we needed each other. We used the grain fields behind our house as a maze and, as I got older, I was able to ride my new red CCM bicycle out of town to visit with friends, Sharon Ellett and Elizabeth Polakovits.

Recently I was telling my grandchildren about walking on the railway tracks. One of them said, "Grandma, why didn't you go to the playground?" The whole town, including the dump, was our playground. Those train tracks were our gym equipment. Every one of us could walk with ease on those gigantic 'balance beams'.

School days were my favorite time. The Sisters somehow managed to have classroom libraries and thus began my lifelong love of reading. I remember how the radio brought Current Events to us each Friday in Junior High. Ping-pong tables in the basement and card games upstairs passed many a cold lunch hour. Otherwise it was skating in the



Mike and Maureen (Sheehan) family photo taken Sept 2006. Back row L to R: Richard Durocher, Patti (Sleccka) Durocher, Maureen, Mike, Sandi (Sleccka) Tellier (sitting), Luc Tellier. Front row L to R: Geoffrey Durocher, Isabelle Durocher, Rebecca Durocher, Andrea Durocher, Stephanie Tellier, Dylan Tellier

winter and softball games in the summer. Sometimes we even got to finish an inning even though the bell had rung.

We were the group of students that moved into the new school once the old Belle Valley was torn down. It was November before the school was finished so those of us in grades one to six, along with two teachers, began the year in the church basement. And what a great new school it was until the day when the ceiling in our classroom began to fall. Fortunately, we had just left to get our lunches when all that happened.

What an education those teachers gave us. We learned the 3 R's: Reading, Writing and Arithmetic, plus much more. We learned how to work on our own with three grades in each class. We learned from each other; you just couldn't help listening while Sister taught the older kids. The Sisters gave us such a work ethic.

The fourth R we were taught was Religion. It was a subject that included those Baltimore Catechism questions and answers! Religion was more than just a subject because it permeated our whole lives. For good luck on tests our foolscap sheets of paper were marked with JMJ standing for Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. Music classes most often were choir rehearsals for Sunday Mass. First Friday masses were a regular part of our lives. Our teachers prepared us for the sacraments. Best of all, as a Catholic school we got days off on certain religious holidays.

Church was also our social life. We had great times visiting with each other in that choir loft. There were Sunday night movies when Father Pratt, pastor at Alexander, brought movies for us to enjoy. Church picnics in June and Fall Chicken Suppers were highlights on our social calendars. Every parish around had their scheduled dates for these gatherings.

I loved being part of the girls' ball team. I began as a bat girl and ended up as first baseman. And what a spot that was for socializing; I got to visit with every girl who ever made it to first. The Church picnics throughout the countryside in June, Farmers Day in Busby, and the Corn Roast in the fall at Sandy Lake gave us lots of great afternoons of friendship. I met my husband to be, Mike Slecza, on one of those occasions.

I did not get to Camilla High School until grade eleven. My parents decided I needed a year of convent life at FCJ convent in Edmonton. I wish I had the opportunity to ask them why. Grade eleven and twelve I was back home and that meant long bus rides, as we traveled west of Alcomdale. It just gave us more time to visit. It was a time to find out where the next country dance was to be held. Then we had

to decide how we were going to get there. Many a romance started at these dances.

After high school I went off to the U of A to become a teacher. It was at this time that both our parents died and I learned how blessed we were to live in a small town. So many people came to help us. We could not have managed without two special couples. Our grandparents, Alex and Elizabeth McGillis, lived nearby and were always so supportive. Helena and Joe Kluthe provided a loving and caring home for us when it was needed.

I came back to teach my first year in Mearns and our neighbors, Therese Ricard and the Banacks kept an eye out for us; even our parish priest, Father Peet came to our house each day to see who needed help with their homework. My sisters and I often talk about those times and there is no doubt that our lives were enriched by the people with whom we grew up. It takes a whole village to raise a family and Mearns did that for us.

Our stay in Mearns ended when I married Mike. His term in the Air Force took us to Beaverlodge, Alberta where I taught school. Both of our daughters were born there. We then moved to North Bay, Ontario and returned to St. Albert in 1971 where I taught school until retirement. I was lucky to have had a job that I loved.

My two daughters, Patti (Richard Durocher) and Sandi (Luc Tellier) are grown. I enjoy watching both of them today as parents. Our six grandchildren, Geoffrey, Andrea, Isabelle, Dylan, Rebecca and Stephanie are as loved as I was, and as their mothers were; but these are different times. There are more worries for parents today than our mother could ever have dreamed possible. One thing never changes though; it still takes the love of many people to raise a child. We learned that in Mearns and we are practicing it today.

Maureen wrote this in July 2006. Sadly, she passed away October 26, 2006 of cancer. Her 63 years were filled with faith, generosity, humor and moral courage. Maureen is an example of the beautiful difference one single life can make!

Janet (Sheehan) Boddez

By Janet Boddez

I moved to Mearns from Edmonton at the age of six months with my parents, Dan and Catharine Sheehan and my older sister Maureen. In the next eight years I was joined by three more sisters, Judy, Rita and Cathy. I remember when the fourth daughter was born. It was suggested to our dad that he might be disappointed with another girl and I was so proud when he answered "Well, you know... my

mother was a girl... I married a girl... and I already have three girls in the house... I kind of like girls!" Our dad always had a good comeback.

Mearns was a wonderful place to grow up. I still smile and stand proud when I am called a "Mearns girl". As in all the small communities in the area, our lives revolved around church and school and the two often overlapped. For example, the music program at school was really preparation for the church choir on Sundays and Holy Days. There were extra practices for the choir girls. It was a big deal when in grade

four we were invited to join the choir. It amazes me now to think that at the age of ten years we were singing Latin in perfect pitch and in three-part harmony. The girls from the village often sang the descant and alto parts. It was not that we had any better voices but since we did not ride the school bus we were free to stay after school for extra practice in harmony. The music we learned stayed with us. At a funeral in Edmonton this past year, the organist starting playing an old hymn 'Queen of the Angels' and Eileen (Cunningham) Roy and I looked at one another and smiled. We were both reminded of the May processions when we used to walk from the school to the church carrying flowers and a statue of Mary singing "O Mary we crown thee with blossoms today, Queen of the Angels, Queen of the May".

Another pleasant memory is of the annual fall chicken suppers in the church basement. The place was a-buzz with action around those old stoves. Everyone seemed to have their special talent, whether it be making Jello, pies, gravy or carving the turkeys. Everything was homemade and everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves while working. There were tickets to be bought and prizes to be won. I remember the year I was 11 years old when my ticket was drawn and I won the door prize... a load of coal. (I was hoping for the homemade quilt but was soothed when my dad bought the coal from me for \$10.00).

As memorable as the fall chicken suppers were, we also looked forward to the summer parish picnics. Each parish in the area had a certain set Sunday when they would host the picnic. Ball games seemed to be the central focus with boys playing baseball on one ball diamond, girls playing softball on another. Men (those that hadn't been



Marcel and Janet (Sheehan) family photo taken December 2007. Back row L to R: Marcel, Janet, Erica holding Alice; Front row L to R: Jim holding Sally, Bob, Sharon holding Charlie, Suzanne (Boddez) Flynn holding Jack Boddez, Ivy, Darren Flynn

talked into "umping") leaned against cars smoking, talking and laughing. Ladies visited, while keeping an eye on kids. They were busy running around the parked cars playing games of Hide and Seek and Tag. In those days we didn't worry about strangers lurking about... there were no strangers. We knew every person who was there and if a new family should join us, they were just neighbours we had not yet met! They soon became part of the community. Later on in the day there was a supper served in the church basement. The parish Sunday picnics were an important part of our summers.

Winter brought games as well. In these days of five point harnesses for kids travelling in cars and helmets for every sport, I shudder to think of some of the carefree fun we had. One most memorable was tobogganing. Rather than a toboggan and a hill, we tipped over an old car hood and hooked it behind a tractor or a car on the road and were pulled along in the ditch. I remember the snow being deep and soft which is probably what saved us. There was no thought to the dangers of the sharp corners on that wobbly metal hood. We just hoped that the Sabourin boys would keep the car or tractor on the road and not roll over on top of us as we whizzed past them in the ditch. We went home with the odd tear in our clothes and snow packed into every opening and crevice, but what fun! This sledding continued at home as there were years when the snow drifts reached the eaves on the big bus garage. We would climb to the peak of the roof and slide down. No need for hills and mountains and lift tickets!

Living in the village we had the good fortune of having close neighbours. Many hours were spent with the Ricards, the Pelletiers and the Banacks. I also remember that the long evening softball games

would be brought to a close when our dad or mom yelled from the house, "Sheehan girls... time for the beads!" Every day at our house ended with the rosary.

Certain activities at school bring back fond memories as well. Claire (Nobert) Boddez and I were reminiscing about the music festivals we attended every year. St. Charles School always fared well and came home with honours in one or another category but we both remembered the year our group won first place singing "The Happy Wanderer". Claire also remembered that if you rode on Mr. Sheehan's bus he made you sing songs like "Oh you can't get to heaven on an old school bus" all the way to the school where the festival was held.

And for those of us who really liked to sing (and thought we actually could) there was ACT Search for Talent show held in Morinville and aired on the radio on Saturday nights. Lorraine Ricard and I entered one year singing "Bye Bye Love". We didn't sound at all like the Everly Brothers but Lorraine's gift for singing harmony kept us from embarrassing ourselves.

The Convent in Mearns held a special charm for us. The yard was always beautifully kept and we school children were very careful not to go in unless invited. At Halloween, children were always welcome at the convent. We visited and stood in the long back porch singing for our Halloween treats. Christmas was also a special time. We were invited into the convent to see the manger they had set up in their chapel. Our parents brought fresh flowers to the Sisters at Easter and Christmas for the little convent chapel. At the end of her life, when our mom was in the hospital, the Sisters were kind enough to invite my sister Judy and I to live with them in the convent for a couple months. We knew this was a privilege and I remember we were careful not to peek or visit any rooms that were not open. This is just an example of how these School Sisters of Notre Dame were truly an integral part of Mearns. They saw a need in the community and they filled it.

The parish priests also played a big part in our lives. Father Merchant had a television long before we did and I remember that he let Maureen and I watch our first detective show, *Dragnet*, one evening while our parents were visiting with him. On Maureen and Mike Slecza's wedding day, Father Merchant was ill and unable to attend so the entire wedding party visited him in his room at the Edmonton General Hospital. Father Gregory was another priest who endeared himself to everyone in Mearns. When he first arrived he did not drive so our Dad drove him to Busby every Sunday. My favorite memory of Father Peet is that he knew that Maureen, on her wedding day, would be wearing a

gold cross and chain that was originally worn by our grandmother, Elizabeth McGillis at her wedding in 1917. Before the wedding he "borrowed" the cross from Maureen saying he was taking it to be blessed. When he returned it, it was not only blessed, but re-gilded. These gentlemen were our friends as well as our parish priests.

Church was a place of reverence in those days. Children were made to be on their best behavior. We Sheehan girls must have done well because someone asked our parents one day how they managed to keep us in line at church and Dad answered, "I took them out once!"

We five girls were raised in a household by a mom and dad who shared duties. Dad made meals on washday when Mom was busy and even changed diapers. Mom helped in the store doing everything from stacking shelves to pumping gas. I remember Dad teasing us, and Mom's infectious giggle. She was so easy going and she never seemed to get riled. As a mother of five daughters, she taught us the value of having women friends in our lives. The Catholic Women's League brought the ladies of the parish together for social as well as religious purposes. Each CWL member took a turn hosting the meeting and I remember hearing the ladies praying together and planning various events as well as sharing lots of laughter.

Our parents taught us to respect our elders and this they did, not by verbal reminders but by example. I remember how kind they were to Mrs. Agnes Kennedy after Mr. Kennedy died. They did everything for her from driving her to the hairdresser in Morinville every week to shoveling snow and emptying her "chamber pot".

I went to St. Charles School in Mearns from grades one to nine then High School at Camilla, Riviere Qui Barre and Faithful Companions of Jesus (FCJ) Convent in Edmonton. I received a degree in Medical Radiation Technology at the Edmonton Misericordia Hospital and worked in the Hinton Hospital and then 22 years at the St. Albert Hospital.

In 1968 I married Marcel Boddez from Riviere Qui Barre. After living in Hinton for nine years we moved back to Riviere Qui Barre to raise our family. We have three married children: Jim (Erica Elbrond) who have three daughters, Alice and Ivy (twins) and Sally; Suzanne (Darren Flynn); and Bob (Sharon Anthieren) who have two sons, Charlie and Jack.

Mearns was, and still is to this day, a place with beautiful humble people who care about each other. Wonderful kind people like Mrs. Helena Kluthe who so generously opened her home to my sisters after our parents died. Also, Therese Ricard who has wished me (and my sisters) Happy Birthday every

year of our lives, whether it be with a birthday card in the mail or her trademark “singing birthday message from Mearns”.

At a recent St. Charles School reunion I had a chance to come together with some of the friends that I grew up with. Some I hadn't seen for years but it took just minutes to feel home again. They were the people with whom I started school and who were there through all those good years and also the years when we lost our parents. I wonder now how we would have gotten through the tough times without people around us that we knew loved us and cared. We've talked about it a lot since—we know how lucky we were to have been living in Mearns at that time of our lives.

Mearns provided us with good roots.

Judy (Sheehan) Victoor

By Judy Victoor

For me, growing up in Mearns was an experience steeped in friendliness, adventure, safety, freedom, tragedy and religion. Memories are slippery at best and mine tend to be sketchy. When my four sisters and I discuss our early years we are able to surprise one another with personal remembrances and occasionally we disagree on what actually took place.

There were certain constants in our family life that included the following. On Sundays after church people came to the store to pick up some groceries and visit. Since mom was busy making breakfast we sometimes helped dad by handing the kids the candy they chose. Sunday afternoons or weekday evenings included visits to grandma and grandpa McGillis. Mondays, when mom did the wash, dad would make us a soup lunch. Our grandmother told us that our dad did more with us kids than most dads would have done in those days. On some Saturdays, dad would go to town to pick up supplies for the store and we might get to ride along.

On evenings when the weather allowed, we played games like “hide and go seek”, “kick the can”, “ante-I-over” or baseball. The evening would end with the family saying the rosary together. Sunny summer days or evenings our parents would take us to the local lake or river for a swim.

Some special times for our family were Christmas when we would be put to bed with stories and warnings about Santa not coming if we didn't sleep. After the double midnight mass we rushed home to open gifts. In later years we'd run around to our friends' homes and talk about what we'd received. To celebrate our birthdays we'd invite our friends over to play games and have cake together.



Bruce and Judy Victoor and family, Jill, David, and Anne – 1977

Easter would never have been complete without our new hats and the search for bunny treats. We always had dogs to play with and once even tried to keep some rabbits.

Our dad was the disciplinarian in our family but he was also the one who played games with us, told us stories and often “repped” our games. He was a charismatic person who had a way with people. He let it be known that he expected certain behaviour and grades from us and he had all five daughters convinced that we were each his favorite.

Mom was a gentle, relaxed person who didn't raise her voice and didn't even get angry with me when I dyed her wedding dress (with bluing) in an effort to make it really white. I don't remember her criticizing any of us girls much. When I think back it always seems that mom managed a house of five daughters without ever getting ruffled. Mom and dad went out quite regularly and seemed to enjoy the company of others. Before we were old enough to stay on our own we had many of the local girls babysitting us. One rather exciting but dangerous day for me took place when I wasn't school age yet. I had run up the road onto the train tracks and when I realized that a train was coming, I froze. Our Aunt Helen saw me, yelled for me to get off and, when I didn't move, she ran up and carried me home. It seems all the adults in the village took responsibility for any kids within sight. I'd say my early years were comfortable and predictable.

Because we lived right in the hamlet, the people who lived in the houses around us played a huge part in my memories. Jo-Anne Ricard, Rosemarie Banack and Betty Pelletier were my first friends and we spent many days together building forts, riding bikes, going on picnics, picking tiger lilies, playing board games, playing school or house and squabbling occasionally.

We could spend hours away from home and it seems our parents didn't have to worry about much more than whether we were getting wet or dirty or not getting home on time for supper. We had so much freedom and we didn't limit our bike rides to the village by any means. The sloughs, bluffs, and country roads were ours to explore.

Starting school meant an introduction to many more friends and of course the School Sisters of Notre Dame. Throughout those early school years I have good memories of the hard working, strict but caring Sisters and I often feel that my experiences in their classes have influenced my long career in the teaching profession. Some of the things that come to mind when I think back to St. Charles' days are the classrooms with their huge windows, the little footstools, the seatwork for each grade written on a different part of the board, the smelly bathrooms, and the cloakroom/library.

The best part of the school day of course was recess or lunch hour filled with skating, racing around the snow piles surrounding the rinks, the swings and teeter-totters, building forts with boards from old buildings, talking with friends in sunny corners and racing to be first to touch home base claiming our batting order.

Religion naturally was integral to our schooling and I remember choir practices on Friday afternoons, lining up to go to confession with the priest, attending First Friday Masses and being on our best behavior with our hands folded and eyes down as the Nuns had instructed. And the special May parade honoring the Blessed Virgin with the beautiful statue that had been delivered to our parish especially for the occasion. Other incidents come to mind like the visits from the superintendents, sliding down the banister, festivals like the one with "The Rainbow Drill", the mysterious science cabinet and the Nuns habits blowing out in the wind.

Naturally though, the best part of all the memories are the people I met at school. I find it strange that during my life I have met thousands of people who have faded from my memory but I can recall the students who attended St. Charles with me so many years ago. Is it just nostalgia or were they all such genuine, hard-working, good people?

Losing our parents at such a young age was, of course, tragic. As young as I was, I didn't really understand the extent of our loss. Our neighbors, relatives, friends and Joe and Helena Kluthe in particular, helped us in so many different ways. I often had a feeling of being coddled a bit by teachers or other adults. Instead of having one mom and dad, my sisters and I had several.

During two and a half years, Rita, Cathy and I

stayed with Joe and Helena Kluthe. I recall the novelty of having a room of my own and the many delicious treats that Helena made. Mr. and Mrs. Kluthe were always so kind and patient with us, teaching us how to sew or say a few words in German. During these years I developed friendships with Lucille Sabourin and Rosemarie Kluthe.

Rita, Cathy and I moved away from Mearns to live with our sister, Maureen and her husband, Mike in Beaverlodge, Alberta. I finished high school there.

Since attending the University of Alberta and receiving my education degree I have been an elementary school teacher. I married Bruce Victoor and we have three children: Dave, Anne and Jill who are now grown and living on their own. We keep busy with work and grandchildren.

Although the years in Mearns are only a small fraction of my past, they hold a special place in my memories. I feel lucky to have had the childhood that I did.

Rita (Sheehan) Sepanzyk

By Rita Sepanzyk

My thoughts of Mearns are bittersweet. I left after grade six so my memories are quite innocent and childlike yet mixed with some traumatic events. When I now encounter a quiet hot lazy summer afternoon with the odd fly buzzing, it brings me right back to a summer day in Mearns.

The long bike rides and picnic lunches at the dump; hours spent in the "hideout" in the bushes between us and the Rectory; the Big Wheel Club – one had to haul an old tire onto the roof of the garage for initiation; the Big Rock – the common meeting spot half way between us and Banacks; Therese Ricard's buns, her cinnamon buns that is; manning



Rita and sons Brian (L) and Steven (R) taken at home of Rita and Jeff McCrae in Kelowna, BC

the chocolate bar section in the store after Sunday Mass; Daddy driving us to the river to swim, dodging cow pies and the thistles to change into our swimsuits; after it rained, Mom encouraging us to run barefoot and slide in the white silty mud across from Ricards – we called it “The Highway”; kick the can, anty-anty-I-over, playing scrub, skating, crack the whip – so much play-time. Can you believe we had so much fun without TV and gameboys?

I’ll always have the memory of losing Mom and Dad when I was eight years old. It’s all part of Mearns but what also came of that is the many, many acts of kindness that the community bestowed on myself and my sisters. Helena and Joe Kluthe were amazing providing such a loving and safe home for us – Mrs. Kluthe was truly a modern day saint. Living outside the hamlet on their farm made me appreciate the bigger community. The Schafers and Hermanutz kids were always fun to be around, and running for the bus down that long lane when we were late... no, that wasn’t fun.

Looking back, my time in Mearns was short but action packed and entertaining. I’m still proud to say I’m a Sheehan girl from Mearns. I hope I passed on to my sons, Steven and Brian, some of the qualities I gained from living in such a caring community.

Cathy (Sheehan) Soetaert

By Cathy Soetaert

Catherine Marjorie Sheehan married Phillip Soetaert on November 8, 1975 in the Villeneuve



Phillip and Cathy (Sheehan) Soetaert Family. Standing L to R: Cathy, Phillip, Tom. Sitting L to R: Ron, Chris.

Church. Phillip and Cathy moved to the Riviere Qui Barre area on the SE 13-56-27-W4 quarter, the farm originally owned by Alphonse and Georges Nobert.

Phillip’s farm business is a grain and cow-calf operation.

Phillip and Cathy are raising three sons, Christopher, Tom and Ron. They like all aspects of the farm and enjoy hockey.

Sheehan, Darrell & Donna

By Donna Sheehan (Perrott)

Darrell Joseph Sheehan was born August 26, 1956, the eldest child of Joseph and Thelma Sheehan (nee Boddez). He attended St. Charles School from grades one to six until the school was closed. Our Mearns story began on April 6, 1976 when Darrell purchased the quarter section SE 33-56-26-W4. He bought the quarter from Mr. Gus Walters who had bought it previously from Jimmy Halle. While helping out on the family farm, Darrell pursued his carpentry career employed by John Bokenfohr, owner of Sturgeon Erectors.



Darrell and Donna Sheehan Family – January 1995. Back row: Donna, Darrell, Trevor, Trish. Front row: Erin, Brendan, Kyle & Neil

On July 18, 1981 Darrell married Donna Perrott, the eldest child of Gordon and Lucy Perrott (nee Kluthe). For the first two years of our marriage, we rented a house from Phil and Cathy Soetaert, formerly the Nobert farm. With the arrival of our first born, Trisha Lynn, on May 30, 1983, Darrell wanted to be home more. Much of his work was out of town and after nine years with Sturgeon Erectors, he left to pursue a new career. In the spring of 1983, Darrell was hired by Perro-Mac Farms (Larry and Joan Perrott) to build hog barns.

With Darrell’s carpentry background, he and I, with the help of family and friends, built our new home on our Mearns’ quarter section. We moved in



Darrell and Donna Sheehan Farm

August 26, 1983 and so it began. On April 15, 1985, Trevor Joseph was born; followed by Brendan Peter on October 14, 1987.

For the first year with Perro-Mac Farms, Darrell constructed the additional hog barns. When he finished, Larry needed help with raising hogs and grain farming. That's when Darrell's farming career began. He continued working for Perro-Mac until 1988 when he decided to build his own hog barns. We started out with a 50 sow farrow-to-finish hog operation. Thanks again to family and friends during this construction project.

It was a big race to see who would farrow first, me or the gilts. Our first gilt farrowed in February, 1989 and Neil Patrick was born March 15, 1989; I lost. So in 1989, Darrell and I were busy raising kids and hogs. Kyle Daniel arrived May 18, 1991. Once again, Darrell had the itch to build, so we expanded our hog operation to 175 sows in 1993. Between cement pours, Erin Marie was born on May 29, 1993 – finally a sister for Trisha!

In July 1995, Darrell was diagnosed with brain cancer. After a short but valiant battle, he passed away November 20, 1995 at the age of 39. With the grace of God, faith, love and support of community, family and friends, we continued farming until October 2004, when we sold the last of our hogs.

The years continue to fly by. On November 4, 2005, Trevor married Meaghan LeBlanc and to date have two beautiful children, Mackenzie Grace and Clay Darrell. Eight short months later, Trisha married Everett Normandeau on July 8, 2006. They have one child, Daymon Darrell. Life is great and my family continues to grow!

I would like to thank all who lent a hand or an ear with either the farm or my children over the years. Thank God for community, family, and friends! The group "Alabama" still say it best in

their song entitled "There Are Angels Among Us".

Love Donna Sheehan and family

Sheehan, Joseph & Thelma

By Joseph & Thelma Sheehan

We were married on July 6, 1955 in St. Emerence Church, Riviere Qui Barre. We made our new home on the farmstead where John and Margaret Sheehan (Joe's grandparents) had lived when they moved to

Alberta from St. Malachy,

Quebec in 1906. We rented the quarter section of land from Uncle Dan Sheehan and the buildings from Aunt Dora Gibson (Sheehan). We lived in the house that Joe's grandparents had built on this property.

In 1957 we purchased the farm. Joe had to work out to supplement our meager farm income. He worked on a telephone line crew, at Cardiff mine, the Morinville Seed Plant and various construction jobs.

In about 1959 we installed electric power on our farm. It was quite a treat to become reacquainted with the world of electricity. A fridge, electric washing machine and deep freeze were now part of our world.

In 1962 we bought the quarter section south of our farm. This farm originally belonged to Frank Sheehan and on his death was willed to Patricia (Sheehan) McRae. It is now the home of our son Mike, his wife Andrea and their sons, Brett and Cole.

In 1967 we built a new house on our farm. Our family was growing. We now had seven children: Darrell, Joan, Dan, Mary, Jim, Mike and Dolores. The old house was getting crowded as well as becoming colder every winter. The new house wasn't big, but it was warm.

In 1969 we put running water into our home. What a treat! This meant flush toilets, a bathtub and an automatic washing machine.

In 1971 we bought another quarter of land from Joe Tellier. Later in 1981 our son Jim bought an acreage that was sub-divided off Joe Tellier's south quarter. He now lives there with his wife Joyce and their children: Cody, Riley and Gregory. Later, they purchased the remainder of this quarter section and they now farm there.

The first five of our children attended St.



The Joe Sheehan Family – 1995. Back row L to R: Darrell, Dan, Mike, Dave, Jim, Ryan. Middle row: Mary, Dolores, Thelma, Joe, Teresa, Joan. Front row: Debbie

Charles School in Mearns. Darrell started school there in 1962. Joan, Dan, Mary and Jim all went to St. Charles School until 1969. At this time, St. Charles School was closed. The nuns continued to live in the convent at Mearns, but taught in Camilla School.

By 1972 we had ten children: 6 boys and 4 girls: Mike, Dolores, David, and Teresa had joined our family clan between 1965 and 1972. We thought that our family was complete, but God had other plans. On December 30, 1978, Debra Elaine (our fifth daughter) was born. She entered this world with many health complications: Down's Syndrome, a hole in her heart, an abdominal tumor and a club foot. With the help and support of family

and friends, as well as many understanding medical people, we began our journey with Debbie.

She has filled our life with many surprises, opened a whole new world to us of people with special needs and has taught us all many lessons in loving, acceptance, patience and perseverance.

In 1995 we suffered a painful loss when our son Darrell died of a brain tumor at the age of 39. He left his wife, Donna, and their six children aged two to twelve. Today we have 24 grandchildren and three great grandchildren, and the family tree continues to grow.

Life has been good. Living in a close-knit rural community has provided a great deal of support in dealing with daily occurrences.

They say that it takes a village to raise a child and these rural communities are a living testament to that statement.

Sheehan, Pat & Simonne

By Pat Sheehan

I was born on the farm NW 10-56-26 W4 in 1928 to Peter Sheehan and Mary Paquette. Our location was actually in the St. Charles Parish but being that my mother was from Riviere Qui Barre, we continued to use RQB as our parish. My grandfather, Joseph Paquette, owned the store there so we always got a Sunday treat after mass.

I attended Belle Valley School. My teachers were Father Walter Fitzgerald, Alma Steffes, Gertie



Joe & Thelma Sheehan celebrate their 50th anniversary with family – 2005



In August of 1952 Pat Sheehan brought his bride, Simonne Borle, to Mearns to live in the small house next to the store

Steffes, Miss Johnson and Justine Hittinger. My final year of school was at St. Anthony's College in Edmonton.

As a child I remember Father Stacey visiting us on the farm. He was probably trying to get Mother and Dad to join the St. Charles Parish. The priest following Father Stacey was Father Faye. One of my favourite memories as a kid was watching games of broomball organized by Father Faye. The rink was located across the road from the Pacific Grain Elevator in Mearns. My dad would play whenever he could get away from the farm.

In 1952 I bought the trucking business in Mearns from John (Bud) McGillis. In August, I brought my bride, Simonne Borle, to Mearns. We lived in a small house next to the store.

Simonne was from the Ray district and the daughter of Prudent Borle and Emmerence Boddez. Simonne was approached to teach at the school in Mearns and she accepted. She loved teaching with the Sisters and became close friends with them. The Sisters felt that Simonne's first Christmas as a new wife should be special. With their help Simonne made me a shirt. They didn't have a pattern and really didn't know much about sewing. The shirt was a size 16 but the collar was a size 18. We still laugh about this first Christmas gift.

Simonne and I joined St. Charles Parish and we loved being an active part of the church. Norman Logan asked Simonne if she would be the organist and with his coaching she soon managed to handle the old pump organ. Simonne joined the CWL and became an active member. She still remembers

working at the fall suppers in the old church basement.

I remember all the trips I made driving Father Gregory to Busby mass in his new 55 Chevy. I also had the privilege of starting the fire in the church every weekend. We found the people of the area very friendly and generous; they made us feel welcome and part of the community.



In 1952 Pat Sheehan bought the trucking business from Bud McGillis. The trucking business consisted of general hauling: grain, livestock, coal, drums of fuel, bales, posts, furniture, etc.

The first year that we lived in Mearns was a very rainy summer and the roads were sometimes impassable. At times we felt isolated but we were pleased by the regular evening visits of Father Gregory Rijniers. Many nights were spent playing cards with Dan and Catherine Sheehan and Father.

The impassable roads affected the trucking business. Thanks to Emile Ricard, I was pulled out of the ditch many times with his new 500 Case tractor. There was never a charge.

The trucking business consisted of general hauling; grain, livestock, coal, drums of fuel, bales, posts and furniture. At that time the school board was replacing the old school with a new one in Mearns. They agreed to pay me \$4.00 an hour for truck and man to haul away the materials as they demolished the old school. I believe the demolition crew were all volunteers.

One instance that I recall was hauling coal to Ed Ellett's place. I got stuck in the snow on what was known as Cloutier's Hill. It was a wild storm so I walked across the field to Elletts and stayed until the storm let up. I borrowed a parka from Ed and walked home. The next day when I returned the parka he said, "That parka fits you... you should buy it." I said, "How much?" Ed said, "\$10.00, but we will play a game of cribbage for it ... double or nothing". Needless to say I got a free coat. (I wouldn't be telling this story if I hadn't won.)

One of the most disturbing memories of my trucking days was going with our Bailiff, Maurice Bugnet, and the RCMP to seize some cattle from a farmer at Lac La Nonne. This farmer owed \$90 to the Royal Alex Hospital for medical attention. It took 3 head of cattle to pay the bill. The farmer was angry and distraught because he was losing part of his livelihood. That was in the days before Medicare.

Times changed and farmers found the need to have their own trucks, which was a signal for us to move on. We sold the house to Hugh Kennedy and the truck and garage to Dan Sheehan. We moved with our two girls, Dianne and Colleen, to Drayton Valley.

Over the years we also lived in Dawson Creek and eventually settled in Villeneuve. We have six daughters and one son, all married. We are proud to have 25 grandchildren and seven great grandchildren... and our family continues to grow. We feel fortunate to be in good health and continue to be an active part of our community. We still keep in touch with many of our Mearns friends and look fondly back on the memories made there.

Short, Pat and Mary (later Gibeault)

By Mary Gibeault

My parents came to Canada in early January 1930. They came from the Ukraine and the following year Dad had purchased two quarters of land about 50 miles east of North Battleford, Saskatchewan. There was a town about three miles from our home by the name of Alticane, a post office and two stores. There were also a number of other families in the area.

As the years passed our family of nine children grew and we went to a school called Canada School. I was the oldest of the family.

In January 1945, I went to North Battleford to work at the hospital, in the kitchen. I made some new friends and we'd go to dances on weekends. There I met a handsome young man named Pat Short. We dated all summer and got married in October 1945.

At that time Pat was working for the C.N.R. as a brakeman on the trains. But the pay wasn't too good. In 1951 Pat heard there was a road building crew looking for men for their crew to operate the machines. So we packed up and came to Edmonton and he got the job he wanted with much better pay.

We were told to go to Egg Lake Coal Mine and move into a house that was our home for nine years. Pat worked with the road builders in summer and at the mine during the winter months. North American Road Builders also owned the mine.

Pat and I had five children, Edward, Shirley, Gary, Randy and David. Three were born at the mine and the house was small so in January 1962 we moved to Morinville and I have lived in Morinville since then.

Pat died of a heart attack May 15, 1978 when he was 60 years old. I was a widow for three and a half years and then met Pete Gibeault. We were married November 28, 1981. Pete died on June 9, 2003 when he was 85 years of age. Later I moved into Edmonton to live with my daughter.

David Short, my youngest son, lives in Morinville with his wife and two little girls.

Shoveller, John & Mary

(Story taken from "Decades of the Independence District" published in 1981)

(John and Mary Shoveller were living in Egg Lake at the time of the 1901 Egg Lake Census. The record says John was born August 12, 1860 and Mary Ellen, his wife, was born October 27, 1864).

Although the Shoveller name has always been connected with Busby, it was first associated with Independence. Mr. and Mrs. John Henry Shoveller came to the district in the early 1900's. They had a store two and a half miles north of the present Independence corner. The Post Office was also in the store. The mail would come out as far as Riviere Qui Barre and Mr. Shoveller would bring it from there. Their neighbour to the south was Jack Graph. Good friends were the Thynes who lived for a time on what was later the Mitchell farm.

Ruth Shoveller was born in 1901, the first white child born in that area. Emma May was born in 1903. The girls attended Independence School and the family attended Independence Church in its early days. Mrs. Shoveller sang in the choir and loved it. They were a musical family.

Any road leading away from their place was a trail. Below the farm to the south was a creek that had to be crossed so it was a happy day in their recollections when a bridge was finally built.

They were good friends to all. Many a food basket went out of the store to needy families. When the Town of Busby came into existence, the Shovellers moved there and kept a store for many years.

Ruth married Archie Kelly, son of Reverend James Kelly. They lived in the Ray district, east of Riviere Qui Barre on a farm. Ruth passed away in the early thirties. Emma May married Bert Spargo of Alcomdale. They farmed a mile and a half north of the town. They sold and moved to Edmonton in the thirties and then to British Columbia.

Skayman, Roger & Betty

By Betty Skayman (Kluthe)

Betty Skayman (Kluthe), the eldest daughter of August and Josephine Kluthe, married Roger in 1963. We have four children; Wanda, Michael, Sandra and Tanya. We also have six grandchildren; Cameron, Melanie, Nicholas, Todd, Paige and Damon.



Betty and Roger Skayman

We lived in Edmonton while Roger worked for Edmonton Telephones and Edmonton Power for 36 years. He retired at age 56 and we moved to Vancouver Island, Nanaimo, for a short time. It was like a vacation living there but the family and grandchildren were all living in Alberta and it was very lonely without them.

We spent time (summers) at Bear Lake when not visiting Grandpa and Grandma Kluthe's farm for the last forty years. We built a cottage on the lake, which is thirty kilometers northwest of Edson. The last time Grandpa August Kluthe was at Bear Lake, overlooking the beautiful calm water, he said, "I wonder if this is what heaven would be like". Our mother, Josephine, enjoyed the cottage as well. She painted a mural on a wall using her many talents. The carved wood sign, "THE SKAYMANS" that she made in Mearns taking evening classes, is still in use at Bear Lake.

Wanda was an elementary school teacher in Edson when she met Eugene Miluch, her husband, who works for Suncor. They live only five kilometers from Bear Lake; therefore we spend months in the country. Their house overlooks the McLeod River and it has a lovely view of their two quarter sections of land they farm. They have two boys, Nicholas, nine years old, and Todd, seven

years old... our two farmers and hockey players. The boys love to help on the farm and enjoy their time quading and doing water sports with their boat at Bear Lake. Nicholas is a good serious hockey player while Todd is also a good hockey player, but he is there for the socializing, like his dad.

Michael and Brenda have two children, Cameron, 14, and Melanie, 11. Michael works at Epcor as an electrician and Brenda works for the government. Michael enjoys his time outdoors hunting, fishing and skidooing at the lake. They bought our house in Edmonton and totally remodeled their home. A Job Well Done! It looks like a Dream Home. Cameron and Melanie play soccer, baseball and enjoy skiing. In the summer they visit the cottage at Bear Lake and like riding their motorbikes.



Roger & Betty, Tanya, Wanda, Sandra, Michael

Sandra and Troy Shelemey also have two children, Paige, eight years old, and Damon, five years old. Damon is in kindergarten at Sturgeon Heights in St. Albert school and Paige is in her third year. Troy and Sandra's family business is Shelemey Financial in St. Albert. They enjoy their home on an acreage in Silver Chief Estates, ten minutes west of St. Albert among the trees and beautiful countryside. Grandma's piano is well used as both Paige and Damon take lessons. Damon loves to golf and play soccer while Paige, an excellent reader, also enjoys karate and swimming.

Tanya received her degree in nursing. Her first job was working in the Burn Unit for a year, then in the Emergency Room and ICU where she met her husband, Dr. Chao Yu. They married in Vancouver and lived there for a few years. They're back in Alberta because of career changes. Tanya is teaching fourth year nursing students at the University Hospital. They live in St. Albert, across the street from the Sturgeon River in a beautiful two-story show home with a large yard, all

landscaped. There are excellent trails and walkways for biking and in the winter for cross country skiing.



August & Josephine Kluthe Family – circa 1964. L to R: Lawrence, Herman, Marilyn, Betty, John Norman, Rose, Willy, August and Josie

My parents, August and Josephine Kluthe

My dad, August Kluthe, was born in Germany in 1905; he came to Canada at the age of 17. He was very proud to be a Canadian. He never asked or wanted much in this world except to be well enough to enjoy their home that they built together on their acreage in 1977, within five minutes from their old farmhouse. The old house was built around 1942 with running water and electricity from a 32-watt power plant. We never knew the hardships our parents endured. We always had all the conveniences. Dad's life was his farm and his family. He never gave up the idea of coming back to his home on the farm when he spent time in the hospital.

Dad never liked anyone to fuss over him and never wished to be a burden to anyone. But he could not resist goodies for his sweet tooth. That attention he didn't mind. August Kluthe passed away on February 21, 1983. Josephine Kluthe died on May 21, 1991. She had Alzheimer's for years. Both of my parents must be at peace now to know their grandson David, his wife Lori and great grandchildren are living in their home.

The following was written by Josephine Kluthe, the only letter we found.

"On April 23, 1935 we, August and Josephine, were married and had no home to go to. We stayed with Joe Kluthe and my sister Emma until the middle of November. Meanwhile I was working in the fields, picking weeds in the summer fallow and crops, while they were ploughing with horses, then in the fall we were stooking, etc... After harvest we moved into our own shack on our quarter of land. I started cleaning, wallpapering and building partitions, making two rooms upstairs. I also built

clothes closets and by the second week of December it was quite decent. Our Home, it was Heaven!

"On the twelfth of December, Joe and Emma asked for my help to make clothes for their first baby, Lucy, who arrived two weeks early. The clothes hadn't arrived from the Eaton's catalogue because money was very scarce and they didn't order them until they had to. We couldn't pay our taxes either, but luck was with us. August could work on the road with his horses to pay for them. We still had cream to ship, and we always had a good garden and canned a lot of vegetables, etc... We didn't have a washing machine, so we scrubbed by hand and made our own soap. So we went on; our cream was \$2.00 to \$2.50 for five gallons and our grain was ridiculously low. We had total frost the first year, then hail the next two years. By 1940 everything improved. We rented a quarter of land from Lutz's and things began to look up. Our land had a good crop twice in a row and also the rented quarter had an excellent crop."



One of many of Josephine Kluthe's decorated cakes raffled off at Mearns Supper

Josephine, my mother, had a huge garden and many flower beds and a beautifully landscaped yard. She took pride in her plants, indoors and outside. That was how she enjoyed living. Her hobbies were decorating wedding cakes for friends, relatives and neighbours; also knitting and crocheting. There wasn't anything she tried she couldn't do well. She painted very well, she was very artistic and talented in many ways, especially interior decorating and sewing. Her family and grandchildren were the most important things to her.

She was always smiling and beaming with pride when her seven children, their spouses and nineteen grandchildren were together.

Soetaert, Gilbert (Gib) & Rita (Sabourin)

By Rita Soetaert

I was born in Mearns to Ovila and Alma Sabourin who moved to Mearns in 1927 and were married in 1928. I was number seven out of 12. We had a great family. We didn't always have the best, but Mom and Dad worked hard to keep us all fed and clothed.

Syrup pails and gopher tails, that's what I remember most about Egg Lake; we brought our lunches in syrup pails – Rogers Golden Syrup tin pails.

In 1943 I started grade one with Clara Tellier as my teacher. I remember being scared stiff when she called my name to come to the front desk. My older brother Paul said you might get the strap. My other brother nodded for me to go up and I got my first book, Tom & Jerry Grade One Reader. The mornings were very busy trying to get ready for school. Mom was outside milking cows so my oldest sister had to keep us moving. Curling hair took extra time so in grade two I got my first hair cut – short. My curls were gone. I wanted to keep my hat on all day.



Gib and Rita Soetaert on their wedding day April 15, 1959

I remember recesses playing prisoner's base, hopscotch, skipping and following the big boys across the field to drown gophers at noon hour. We would pour water in the hole and wait with a stick at the other hole. The price was five cents a tail. After school we would catch baby magpies for five cents for a pair of feet.

In grade five is when the big change came. Father Merchant had managed to get some Nuns to build a convent in Mearns and amalgamate three smaller schools. School buses came into effect, but for a year we still had to walk a mile to catch the bus.

The school was not ready because it had not been moved yet, so Father asked my dad, Ovila Sabourin, if he could pick them up every morning and give them a ride to Egg Lake, four and a half miles away and then take them back home at 4:00 p.m. We had a Model T Ford. Three Sisters got in and rode back and forth for a month. Dad was busy harvesting and would have to stop. Dad may have received money for gas, but not his time.

On September 28, 1948, Belle Valley School was moved and it needed lots of fixing and repairs. Many parents helped scrub floors and paint walls. On October 25th the Sisters and students moved, following a large truck of desks from Egg Lake.

Classes began at 9:00 a.m. with 84 pupils enrolled in two rooms. Sister Mary Edward and Sister Henrita were teachers and Sister Clovis was the cook and housekeeper for the teachers.

In 1949, the Labby School was moved and Justine Hittinger taught, followed by Sister Clarice, till I left in 1954. I took my grade 12 at SSND in Waterdown, Ontario. I didn't go back to school.

As kids we experienced all kinds of benefits that we didn't appreciate enough at the time. We had great opportunities and most of the students have excelled and held great careers. I remember First Fridays of the month (school started earlier for Mass at 8:30 a.m.) and Christmas Concerts. In looking back I'm sure we were blessed.

In 1950 to 1954 we started a girls' softball team. My brother, John Louis, was coaching when he came back from college. I enjoyed our ball team. The CWL helped us buy our first uniforms.

In spring of 1954 my brother, John Louis, was involved in a tragic accident that was very traumatic for our family. A large truck was parked on Highway 2 with no lights on. My brother was coming home from a dance in St. Albert and rear-ended the truck. The driver was asleep in his truck, with no insurance. My brother's car was totaled. The ambulance took him to hospital, not expecting him to live. His head was swollen three times the size, his eye was gone, his jaw and nose were broken and his leg was broken in three places. It's a miracle he survived... unconscious for days.

We had no phone on our farm so someone phoned Father Gregory to come and tell us at 4:30 a.m. He took Mom and Dad into town. I'll never forget the helpless feeling of not being able to do anything. After three days Dad took me in. Mom

didn't want me to go into the hospital room. We could not recognize him as he was still triple the size. I had to go anyway, he was my brother; he took me everywhere. After six months he came home with crutches. Another six months to recover. He had to change his career and studied engineering at night school.

John Louis is retired now after working for Alberta Transportation for 40 years. He spends half his time with the Snow Birds in Yuma and has a duplex in St. Albert.

In 1956, I got a job at the Bank of Commerce in Edmonton and lived with roommates. I married Gilbert Soetaert from Villeneuve on April 15, 1959.

We purchased land across the road from the home place on RR262 and we operate a large farm today. Gib coached hockey and ball. We were also involved with 4-H exchanges and bowled for 37 years. Gib was nominated to the Regional Recreation Board in 1977. Gilbert was elected to Sturgeon County office in 1980 and served off and on for 20 years. He is still active on many boards and is the Grand Knight for Villeneuve Council. I have been a member of the CWL since 1962, involved in the 4-H Clothing Club as leader for five years, involved in the 4-H RQB Club and coached ball for 12 years. We were honoured with the Farm Family Award in 1991 involved with farm practice in the community.

I'm still a Domestic Engineer. We raised four children: Ken, Corine, Gail and Dillis.

Ken attended Sturgeon Heights School in St. Albert. He and Gerri operate a business in Kelowna, BC.

Corine married Ray Verbeek on April 16, 1983 at St. Peter's in Villeneuve. They have four children and own and operate a mixed farming operation and raise purebred Limosin cattle. Corine is still Leader for 4-H RQB Rancheroes.

Gail married Jacques Plante of St. Paul, Alberta on July 26, 1986. They have a mixed farm and have three children, Daniel, Derrick and Laura.

Dillis was born June 22, 1966. She received her degree in Agrology at the University of Alberta and worked for Agriculture for 10 years. Dillis married Leon in 1988 and has two children Lee and Devin. They live in St. Albert. Leon is a mechanic and Dillis has her own business.

Soetaert, Hector & Vera (Brenneis)

By Vera Soetaert

I was the "last of the litter" in the Ed and Elizabeth Brenneis family. I keep telling my brothers that Mom and Dad saved the "best for the last" but they just won't believe me!



Hector and Vera (Brenneis) Soetaert's Wedding – April 5, 1961 – Ed & Elizabeth Brenneis, Fr. Rijniers, Fr. Merchant, Germaine & Victor Soetaert, Vera & Hector

I was probably one of the luckiest kids in the country, what with seven brothers, one sister and my mom and dad to look after me. Memories of my childhood are filled with family – there always seemed to be lots of activity at our house, what with girlfriends in and out, weddings in the planning stages, nieces and nephews being born. And during those younger years any family member knows that if a vehicle left the yard I was usually trying to tag along.

I attended Mearns School from grades one to nine and was taught by the Sisters of Notre Dame. High School brought a whole new dimension. We "Mearns kids" were going to the "big school" at Riviere Qui Barre. Little did I know then that Riviere Qui Barre would eventually become "home". During this period of my life I met and fell in love with Hector R. Soetaert. We were married in the Mearns church April 5, 1961 with Father Gregory Rijniers officiating. Years later, when we would run into Father Gregory, he'd always say "I tied that knot really tight, I see it's still holding".

We bought the farm of Betty McMillan just three quarters of a mile south of RQB. Our family consisted of three children. Sheryl was born in 1962, Linda in 1963 and Glenn in 1965. Life was busy, what with farming and bussing, 4-H and baseball. But life moves on and so did we. After 22 years in one spot we moved to the Barrhead area, near Dunstable. We "carved our destiny" building up a farm site in 90 acres of bush. It was a "labour of love" and it would have been an impossible

dream without a lot of help from our children, family and friends.

I started working at Dunstable School in the fall of 1983. I am still working there and really enjoy it. All of our children were married after we left Riviere Qui Barre. Sheryl married Kirby Engelking. They have two girls, Shayna and Shelby and live in Spruce Grove. Linda married Larry Knapp. They have four children, Jared, Kyle, Lowell and Mara. Glenn married Jeanette Boisvert and they have three girls, Jessica, Lorissa and Erica. Both Linda and Glenn and their families live in the Dunstable area, within about a mile of us.



Hector & Vera Soetaert's "Home Sweet Home" in the Dunstable area

"Nothing ever changes, nothing stays the same". We are still farming to some degree, we still have several horses kicking around, life is still full of family, I am still playing the organ in church and yes, that knot that Father Gregory tied is still holding 44 years later. The good Lord has truly blessed us.

Soetaert, Phillip

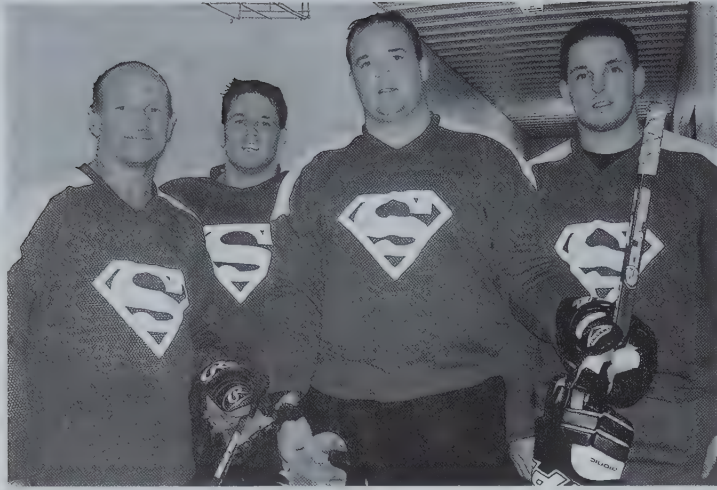
By Phillip Soetaert

I was born in 1951 on a farm two miles north of Villeneuve. I was the fifth child of Hector and Aline Soetaert. In 1974, my younger brother Dennis and I bought land in the Mearns area from George and Alphonse Nobert. Sadly, in 1975, Dennis was tragically killed in a trenching accident while preparing the site for his new mobile home. This accident occurred a week after his 21st birthday and a week before his wedding. Virgil and Solange Price eventually purchased his yard site.

On November 8th, 1975, I married Catherine Sheehan from the Mearns area in Villeneuve and we raised three sons; Chris, Tom and Ron who all have homes within a mile of the farm. Chris married Jennifer Lightheart in June of 2006 and in October 2007 they welcomed Logan William to the family. Chris obtained a heavy-duty mechanics license and operates a heavy-duty mechanical repair business as



'From Two to Seventeen' – Hector and Vera's family photo taken in 2007



Phil and sons at RQB Family Hockey Tournament in January 2007 – L to R: Phil, Chris, Tom, Ron

well as farming with me. Tom and Ron are both journeyman carpenters and operate a framing business (Daton Construction) as well as being actively involved in the farming operation.

Having grown up farming in the Villeneuve area we found a difference in the soil in this new location. I farmed with my dad for over fifteen years and I remember him saying to me, “You’ll need a little more patience to farm land here than you did at home.” Well, I found the patience and have been at it for 36 years. We experimented with different techniques, diversified and managed to run a satisfying and successful operation. This includes both a cow-calf and grain operation.

I have made many good friends in the Mearns area during my years living here and I look forward to spending more time with them while the younger generation takes over the farming operation. After years of farming I look forward to weaning myself off the day to day farming operation and having more time for fishing, quadding, sledding, and hockey. I have taken up a new pastime after 50. I have purchased a motorcycle and am planning on traveling to the States with my friends. I look forward to spending time with family and possibly many grandchildren in the years ahead.

Spargo Family History, “Saga of the Northwest”

By Dewey Spargo

(Story taken from “*Decades of the Independence District*” published in 1981)

“*Saga of the Northwest*” written by Dewey Spargo and published in book form is a story of the life of the Spargo family. This is a condensed copy.

This is a story of the Spargo family, who, tiring of the occupation of woodcutting, sawing lumber and road building decided to migrate to the Great

Northwest in search of farmlands from which they hoped to wrest a fortune, or at least, find a healthier climate and a more satisfying mode of living.

My father, John Spargo came to the United States in 1887, followed in a few weeks by his wife and family of six; Bessie, Paul, John, Will, Tom and Sydney, ranging in ages two to ten years. Sydney died shortly after their arrival. Several years later after trying different projects and going through a depression, it was decided to move to Canada. By that time there were three more children; Pete, Bert and myself, Dewey. I was born in 1898.

They had received glowing accounts of the wonderful Canadian prairies and how to make their dreams come true. Pete and John went ahead of the others. What a disappointment to arrive in Edmonton and find that Canada was in a state of depression. They rode out to the end of steel in the Peace River country and were able to get jobs as mule skinnners. They found work hard, the mosquitoes bad and the water scarce. They came back to Edmonton and sent a letter back home to tell the family not to come west. In the meantime, Bert, Tom and Will had already arrived in Edmonton and one morning they met John and Pete walking down Jasper Avenue. They rented a house with a barn at the back for \$10.00 a month and stayed the winter in Edmonton. They had two teams of horses with them, plus sleighs and wagons, so they soon found jobs hauling coal from the Black Diamond Mine to Edmonton residences.

Tom and Paul found this hard work and that winter bought a quarter section of land, SW 8-57-27-W4, near the present site of the Hamlet of Alcomdale.

The move to Canada took place in 1915. In 1916 John went back to Michigan to persuade our parents and myself to come west, so in June of 1916 we arrived in Edmonton. It snowed some the next morning.

Paul and John were on the farm, with Tom’s wife Virginia keeping house for them. I wanted to continue my education so I got a job as a fireman for the steam heating plant of the Capital Box Company. This I worked at until time to register at Victoria High School. I had nearly finished my grade 11 in Michigan, but was made to start in grade 10 here as I didn’t have the French language or Canadian history. Two years passed before I was ready for normal school and one year at university.

The Spargo home in Edmonton was at 9514-104 Avenue and we all attended the Grace Methodist Church. With Sunday school, orchestra and youth groups, we made many lasting friendships. One close friend was Roland Mitchener. We never

imagined that one day he would become the Governor General of Canada.

In 1916, Paul and Tom broke 20 acres, disked and seeded it to oats. They borrowed six hundred dollars at the Royal Bank in Morinville to buy lumber to build a house. They had to go to Barrhead to get the lumber. The oat crop was completely hailed out in July, but the bank manager had placed insurance on the crop when Paul had borrowed the money. This was a great relief to Paul.

The next two years, 1917 and 1918, were good crop years, but Tom and Paul had not broken all their quarter section. It was slow going with three horses and a walking plow and by midsummer the burnt off gumbo soil had become so hard and dry it was like ploughing through bricks. In the spring of 1919 I wrote my exams and went out to the farm to help my brothers. John had already quit his job and was on the farm. That year the brothers bought a section of land on time payments with very little cash down. Also a new International tractor, 10-20 and a three bottom plow with breaker bottoms. All that summer John and I took turns driving the tractor from 4:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

All the land around Edmonton was called parkland being prairie with clumps of willow here and there. On each quarter section there was about one hundred acres that could be broken with the aid of a little light brushing. That summer John and I broke two hundred and fifty acres of virgin soil, disked it ready for spring seeding. Then we bought another quarter and had to make seven miles of fence from willow posts that fall.

On August 4, 1919 Thomas Jr. was born to Tom and Virginia and four days later my father passed away. He had been suffering from stomach cancer for nine months.

We were farming five quarters in 1919. We had bought farm machinery at high prices but that fall the back lash of war prosperity took place and the prices of grain had gone down. The farmers who had harvested early could get 0.20¢ a bushel for oats but in a week or two the price was down to 0.15¢. Other grains fared accordingly. Taxes were going up, bills came in every mail and living expenses rose. We decided to do custom sawing of lumber to help meet expenses. Pete made a sawmill and we bought an old steam engine, and after much labour got it going.

About that time, Dr. Alcombrack bought the SW 5-57-26-W4, the NW 32-56-26-W4 and the W½ of 27-57-26-W4. The NW 32-56-26-W4 had been owned by Dona Porier. One evening the year before, Tom and I had driven out from Edmonton and stopped at Tom's place across the road from Poriers

and Mrs. Porier came out running to ask us for help. Dona had been cleaning out his forty foot deep well and as he was coming out he lost his hold on the accumulated ice around the brim and had fallen back in. Tom went down the well with a rope and the three of us pulled Dona out. We carried him to the house and Tom went to phone the doctor. The only government telephone was at Mr. Noell's place, about a mile south of us. Mr. Porier had severely injured his back and was a helpless invalid until he died about a year later.

During the winter of 1919 and 1920, I was attending the University of Alberta, Bert was going to Alberta College South and Pete was head filer at North West Sawmill in Edmonton. He was making more money than the rest of us put together and Bert and I were grateful for the financial assistance.

In the meantime, Paul and John were having difficulties on the farm. They had just finished cutting and stooking the grain when the snow came, covering the stooks. The weather turned cold. The livestock began to suffer as there was no feed or straw stacks for shelter. The price of hay jumped to \$50.00 a ton, straw to \$5.00 or \$10.00 for a small load and these loads often tipped over when being hauled a distance over drifted roads. There were no snowplows except that which a farmer could make with two pieces of lumber in the shape of a vee. Then no tractor could push or pull it.

George Moore lost many of his cattle and horses. Mr. Gagne who lived a mile west of Alcomdale, was offered \$90.00 per head for his 50 or 60 steers but refused to sell, preferring to draw money from the Bank to buy feed for them. By spring, his money was gone, most of his cattle had died and what was left he couldn't get \$15.00 per head.

Not only had the country become depleted of livestock, but in 1918 the Spanish Flu had depleted the human population. In some instances whole families were wiped out. Allan Moore, oldest son of George Moore passed away that winter with the flu. Paul borrowed money from the Bank to build a coffin for him. The undertakers could not keep up to the demand. Doctors were working around the clock and prescribing whiskey by the quart.

All that John and Paul had for shelter that winter of 1919-20 was a 10x14 granary built of spruce shiplap. They had a small cookstove in one corner and a sheet metal heater in the opposite corner. The only comfortable place was in the middle. They used a piece of sheet metal, 4x8 feet and nailed to two planks, leaving a space underneath to light a fire. So with all the snow around they were able to melt snow for our dozen or more livestock.

We cut poles to make a shelter for them and we had plenty of firewood. My brothers were lucky to have been able to have bought Mitchell Hanlan's crop of oat sheaves on the adjoining quarter east of them, for 0.25¢ a sheaf. They hauled this home and stacked them near by and on the days they could start a tractor they would thresh some of these sheaves. The straw was fed and used for packing of the pole barn. Grain was ground for the pigs, cows and calves. Each night after supper they would go out and saw a 24-hour supply of firewood by lantern light.

The following spring was late and well into May before we could get on the land. They moved the shack across the road to what we called the Pace quarter where Thomas Spargo lived.

Life at Alcomdale was not all hardships. As new neighbors bought land and settled around us, especially in the Independence district three or four miles west of Alcomdale, we quickly got acquainted and had many social affairs.

I remember the first Alcomdale picnic. Morris Byers offered his pasture, just east of town, for a picnic spot. The men built an ideal dance floor and covered it with poplar boughs. Ball teams were organized. Mr. Pettibone was in charge of sports such as childrens races, adult races and horse races. We even had a slow car race. Anyone owning a Model T Ford was asked to participate, running his car as slow as possible from starting point and not allowed to touch the brake or clutch pedal, after once started. Each car had an observer sitting beside the driver to see that he obeyed the rules. My car stopped so I was out. Mr. Wilfred Cyr won the race. Alcomdale held an annual picnic for many years and always a dance in the evening.

I had been teaching at New England School just west of Alcomdale. That was where Rev. James Kelly held his Sunday services. I was asked to start a Sunday School. The year before, I had been given a permit from Grace Methodist Church Board to do local preaching. Those who came to Sunday School were Maude, Jean and George Bailey, two Latimers, Pettibone and Lovelock families and others.

In 1922 Pete married Lily Cunningham and went to live in the city. In May the same year, Bert married May Shoveller of Busby. They made their home on the adjoining half section to us to the north. It is presently owned by Ted Slecza.

The Spargo brothers partnership now was four of us; Paul, John, Will and Dewey. Will worked in the city most of the time. Adjoining the "Lee Half" on the southern extremity of our farm was a school section of very good land. We wanted to buy it but we had neither the money to buy it or the power to

work it. It did pass through several owners; Disatel, Bourillette, Vandal, Canuel and Mr. Munton. Mr. Munton was a prosperous auctioneer in Edmonton. He asked us to rent his farm, which we did, for nine years. When he died he left the farm in his will to Paul and John. Many years later it was sold to Emile and Camille Ricard.

Dr. Alcombrack, who had hoped to make a lot of money from the sale of lots and the increase in the value of his land, soon found the load too heavy for him. He came out from Winnipeg, where he was practicing, and asked us to buy everything he owned, in and around Alcomdale. We were now becoming "land poor" as now we had thirteen quarters.

In 1927 Etta Henderson came to stay with us and her sister, Mary, went to stay with Bert and May. Lee Loftus was one of our hired men. He worked for us for 20 years with the exception of the two years that he was in the services. He was a good machine operator and there are many buildings still standing as a testimony of his skill as a carpenter.

Walter Kopec was Polish and worked for us for 10 years until he bought a raw quarter two miles west of Alcomdale. He was very good with livestock and was the nicest guy to get along with. Dimetro and Joe Jaworski were two from Ukraine and Poland. They bought a half section of land a mile west and a half mile south of Alcomdale.

In 1929 we moved our sawmill north of Busby and took a contract for logging and sawing. The next year we moved it to Manola where we operated for three years.

In 1930 we took wheat to Westlock to a grist mill to have it ground into flour, cream of wheat, shorts and bran.

In 1931 we hit upon the idea of plowing with the steam engine. We hooked two, three bottom plows behind. But after a few trips across the field, we could see that the open gears and bearings of a steam tractor would not last long under clouds of dust and grit. Rather than ruin the steam engine, we went back to gas tractors. In the fall we bought a steam threshing outfit from Nolan Hough. It was a 65 horsepower Case tractor and a 32-54 Case Separator. For many seasons we threshed most of the crops around Alcomdale. We replaced the steam tractor with a heavy Hart Parr gas tractor.

In 1932 we bought mother her first power washing machine. In 1931-32 we took the agencies of the Cockshutt Tiller and the Elephant Brand Fertilizers. We purchased a six foot tiller combine for our 12-24 Hart Parr and an eight foot machine for our 18-36 tractor. We also bought two tons of fertilizer. That was the beginning of a revolution in

farming methods around Alcomdale. We were able to sell tillers but it was with great difficulty that we could sell any fertilizer. We waited a year to prove the results of our own crops. Slowly the fertilizer business grew but it wasn't until the universities had experimented and recommended it that our sales increased appreciably.

In the thirties there was a surplus of school teachers. One year, out of many applications for the New England School, Miss Olive Little was selected. She was very well liked and stayed four years. During her time at Alcomdale she played the piano for the Red Star Orchestra. The other members were; Dewey Spargo – violinist, Bert Spargo and Arnold Weidrick – trumpet and saxophone, Alex McMillan – trumpet and Arlo Spencer, the traps.

In 1940 I took the Allis Chalmers Agency and sold seven foot All-Crop harvesters besides a couple of swathers. These machines sold for \$600.00, very little more than a power binder and many farmers were tempted to buy them. One could thresh an average of 500 bushels of oats per day. My best day was 1,100 bushels. These were the first combines used north of Edmonton, as far as I can determine, except that of John Stevens of Morinville, who bought a small Massey-Harris machine that year. In 1941 I bought another All Crop and Nap Aslin and I took off 1,100 acres of oats. 1941 and 1942 were wet years. The 1942 crop was the best we had ever produced if we had been able to save it all. The heavy rains flattened the crop and it could not cure properly. We only saved 28,000 bushels before the snow came. We were able to take off some the following spring but it was badly deteriorated.

In 1943 John was quite sick with pneumonia, with the doctor saying that there was no hope. John rallied and lived for another 20 years of usefulness selling fertilizer, machinery and insurance. Bert and May moved to Edmonton in the later thirties where they ran a fruit and grocery store in the city market. After some years they retired and a few years later moved to Penticton, British Columbia.

We had a farm dispersal sale in 1944 with Mr. Munton as the auctioneer. We then moved into Alcomdale and built a place of business as we still had the Cockshutt agency. We bought the old Moore Hotel and lived in it. In 1951 our brother Will died. In 1953 I decided to build a house. John Gonek dug a basement and Herbie Wulff did the carpenter work. In 1954 I married Dorothy Allyn and we lived in Alcomdale. In 1964 John passed away at the age of 84 years. Later Dorothy and I sold the business to Jim Falls and we retired to Penticton. Paul lived with us until his death.

Tom and Virginia Spargo sold out their share of the original quarter section to the Spargo Brothers in the twenties and moved their house into Alcomdale. Tom started a trucking business, which he kept for a number of years. He also built an addition onto his house and started a butcher shop. In 1935 Virginia passed away, leaving Tom with five children from 15 years to two years old; Thomas, Genevieve, Grace, Delmar and Rose. Grace went to live with Pete and Lily in Calgary. The rest of the family grew up in Alcomdale.

Thomas married Olga Janke. They lived on the farm north of Alcomdale and had seven children. Margaret married Douglas Yeoman and they had two children, Corine and Clayton. Douglas was killed in a car accident in 1975. Margaret and children live in Westlock. Gordon married Sharon Pipke of Busby and they live near Busby. They had two children; Tyler and Kelly. Gordon is a mechanic. Ivan married Judy Pipke of Busby and they live one mile west of Alcomdale. They had three children; Amber, Nadine and Marla. Ivan is a mechanic. Lorraine works in Edmonton. Betty married Duane Stewart and they live in Edmonton. Ricky and Sandra are at home.

Genevieve married Allan Campbell. They lived in Edmonton until recently when they moved to Alcomdale. They had six children.

Grace married Jim Summers and is living in Washington. They adopted three children.

Delmar married and is living in Red Deer.

Rose married Ralph Haus and they had three children. They are living in Waterloo, Ontario.

Thomas and Olga sold the farm in 1976 and bought a quarter section with son Ivan, one mile west of Alcomdale.

Bert and May Spargo attended Independence Church as did Dewey and Dorothy. Dorothy was a Women's Institute member serving several positions, one as a constituency convener for Pembina. Thomas and Olga and family also attended Independence Church and Sunday School.

Etta Henderson married Albert Menzies. They lived in Alcomdale for a time and then moved out to Fallis on Highway 16. They had five boys and a girl. Presently they are living in Kelowna, British Columbia.

Grandpa Tom passed away while he was living in what used to be the Moore Hotel.

Spargo, Ivan & Judy

By Ivan Spargo

I grew up on the farm just north of Alcomdale where we raised pigs and grew cereal crops. I was the third in a family of seven children. I attended



Ivan and Judy Spargo Family. Back row: Ryan, Ivan, Brett, Travis. Front row: Nadine holding Barrett, Judy, Marla, Amber holding Ty

Alcomdale School for the first nine grades. I played hockey and baseball with Alcomdale and helped out on the farm as much as possible. I attended grade ten at Westlock High School and continued my schooling for another two years before leaving and going into Edmonton to get a job.

My first job was at Lloyd's Motors where I started in auto body work. I continued working in the auto body industry for the next 10 years.

In August 1971 I married Judy Pipke of Busby and we made our home in Edmonton where we were both employed. Judy worked for the Department of Health and Social Development and I was employed at Jasper Place Body Shop.

In 1975 we moved a mobile home onto a lot in Alcomdale and our first daughter, Amber Jolene Spargo was born May 2, 1975. I was now employed with Kentwood Ford in Edmonton and commuted back and forth.

In 1976 we purchased 80 acres one mile west of Alcomdale on the NE 36-56-27-W4th and built our home. Our second daughter, Nadine Ella Spargo, was born the following spring on April 25, 1977.

After working for Ron Hodgson for two years, I decided to start my own body shop at home. I worked at home for four years and after fixing a Mack Super liner, decided to try driving gravel truck.

On April 22, 1981 our third daughter, Marla Rae Spargo, was born, completing our family.

After a few years of trying our hand at cattle farming, we now rent out the half section of land and I have continued in the trucking industry, mostly in the environmental industry, hauling contaminated waste. Judy looks after a building/RV rental property in Morinville and she watches our grandson, Ty, a few days a week which keeps her busy.

Amber, our oldest daughter is married to Travis Kluthe and lives on an acreage on the home quarter and has one son, Ty William, born August 18, 2002.

Amber continues to work part-time for Alberta Agriculture in Stony Plain and Travis works for Newalta-Environmental Services Division in Nisku.

Nadine, our second daughter is married to Ryan Hoffman and lives in St. Albert. They have one son, Barrett Andy, born November 10, 2004. Nadine is at home for the time being but will be returning to work at Ford Credit Corporation. Ryan works for Ford Motor Company and travels to Saskatchewan weekly.

Marla, our youngest, is working at the University of Alberta and is engaged to Brett Zubiak of Stony Plain. Brett is attending NAIT taking Business Management and they live in St. Albert.

Spargo, Thomas Henry & Virginia Family

By son, Thomas Spargo

Thomas Henry Spargo Sr. was born to John and Grace Spargo in England. He was one of ten children: eight boys, Burt, Pete, Paul, Tom, Dewey, Will, John, Sidney and two girls, Bessie and Lily. The Spargo family travelled by boat from England to New York. It was during this trip that their youngest son, Sidney took ill and died. He was buried in New York. From New York they went on to Michigan where Tom met and married Virginia Marie Lancto who was born in St. Charles, Quebec.

Thomas and Virginia Spargo came from the



Tom & Virginia Spargo

state of Michigan, USA, to Alberta in the year 1915. They brought with them heavy workhorses, wagons and sleighs, which were used in the logging business in Michigan and used them in Edmonton the first winter, delivering coal for the Black Diamond Coal Company. The next year, 1916, they came to the Alcomdale area and bought a quarter section SW 8-57-27-W4, one half mile south of where the hamlet of Alcomdale now is.

In the summer of 1916, Tom Sr. had broken and seeded 20 acres of oats. They borrowed \$400.00 on their crop from the Royal Bank in Morinville to buy lumber to build a house, as they were living in a tent. The bank put \$400.00 of hail insurance on their crop and they were hailed out 100%. Insurance covered the loan. They had to go to Barrhead with the horses to get the lumber. They were able to build a house with two bedrooms upstairs and were able to board the Alcomdale schoolteacher.

In 1924 Tom and Virginia sold their farm to the Spargo Brothers, Tom's brothers who were farming together north of Alcomdale, and moved their house to Alcomdale. They jacked it up, put sleighs under it, hooked eight horses to it and moved it into Alcomdale where they set up a meat market. Tom hauled livestock to market in Edmonton for the local farmers. Virginia took care of the meat market and butcher shop.

At that time they had three children ready to start school. Thomas Jr. was born in 1919, Genevieve in 1921 and Grace was born in 1923. Grace was born during the middle of a March blizzard. It was too early for the baby, so Thomas rode the tractor to Morinville for the doctor. The blizzard was so bad he had to lead the Doctor back to his home in Alcomdale with the tractor. When they arrived, the tiny baby, Grace, was born weighing two and a half pounds. Grace had a few rough months and a few times they thought that she would not survive. She couldn't hold down Virginia's milk or any of the formulas they tried. A family friend suggested they get a Jersey cow and feed the milk to the baby. Grace took to the rich milk and began to thrive. It was six more years before Tom and Virginia had more children. On December 23, 1929 Delmar was born and soon afterwards on February 29, 1932 came Rose.

They were all settled in business with three children in school, which was located a half mile west of Alcomdale where the New England School was located back then. Later, we all moved to a new school built in Alcomdale, where we had inside toilets, a basement and better heating.

Shortly after Rose's birth, tragedy struck the Spargo family and Tom's beloved Virginia passed

away on February 23, 1934 from gall bladder complications. Thomas was now alone with his five children: Thomas 14, Genevieve 12, Grace 11, Delmar 5, and Rosie 2. He was unable to care for them all, so his brother Pete and his wife Lily took Grace to live with them in Calgary. Rose and Delmar went to live in Edmonton with Thomas' mother, Grace. Thomas and Genevieve stayed behind with their father.

Genevieve, the oldest daughter, married Alan Campbell and raised five children. They are David, Colleen, Dan, Shaunie and Beth. She died at age 63 from heart failure.

Grace married Jim Summers after serving three years with the Royal Canadian Navy in Vancouver. They adopted two boys, Kenneth and Kerry. Grace retired in Bellingham, Washington, USA.

Delmar married Shirley and had two children, Cindy and Sheryl. Delmar was also married to Betty and had two children, Pat and Karen. He lives in Red Deer and is now married to Irene and they have one child, Debbie.

Rose lives in Kitchener, Ontario and is married to Ralph Haas. They have three children, Cathy, Karl and Susan.

Thomas Jr. joined the army and served five years in England, France, Holland, Belgium and Germany. On return home he met and married Olga Janke, who lived with her parents a half mile north of Alcomdale. Thomas bought the Spargo Brothers farm north of Alcomdale and continued to farm. Farming was hard and fell into hardship in the sixties when the hog barn with 320 pigs burned to the ground overnight. With very little insurance, the pig barn was rebuilt and they continued in pigs until the early 1970s when they retired. Thomas and Olga had seven children; Margaret, Gordon, Ivan, Lorraine, Betty, Richard and Sandra.

Margaret married Douglas Yeomans and they had two children, Corinna and Clayton. Douglas Yeomans was killed in a vehicle accident in 1975. Margaret is remarried to Brian Golinowski and they live in Westlock where they own a business.

Gordon married Sharon Pipke from the Busby area. They are still farming in that area. They have three children, Tyler, Kelly and Regan. Kelly married Dustin Niggins and they have one child, Ava. Tyler married Talayna Bodnar.

Ivan married Judy Pipke, sister to Sharon. They live one mile west of Alcomdale where they farm and have a trucking business. They have three daughters, Amber, Nadine and Marla.

Lorraine is single and lives in Denver, Colorado. She is in the real estate business and her company works for the Denver Broncos Football Club.



Bert & May Spargo, Irene & John Spargo, Tom & Virginia Spargo with Rose, ---, Grandma Grace Spargo, Dewey, Paul and Thomas Jr. Spargo.

Betty married Dwayne Stewart and they live on a farm in the Busby area. Dwayne works for Inland Concrete and Betty is a teacher's aide in Westlock. They have one son, Devin. They also operate a stable and riding arena.

Richard (Rick) lives in Edmonton with his fiancée, Leanne and her son Brandon. Richard works as an auto body mechanic.

Sandra is married to Bernard Baert and they live in Mayerthorpe. Bernie is an electrician and Sandra works at the school. They have three daughters, Amy, Krista and Gena.

Thomas Jr. and Olga are now retired in Westlock and live in a 40-unit retirement complex called Brookside Village.

Stevens, Jack & Joyce

By Jack Stevens

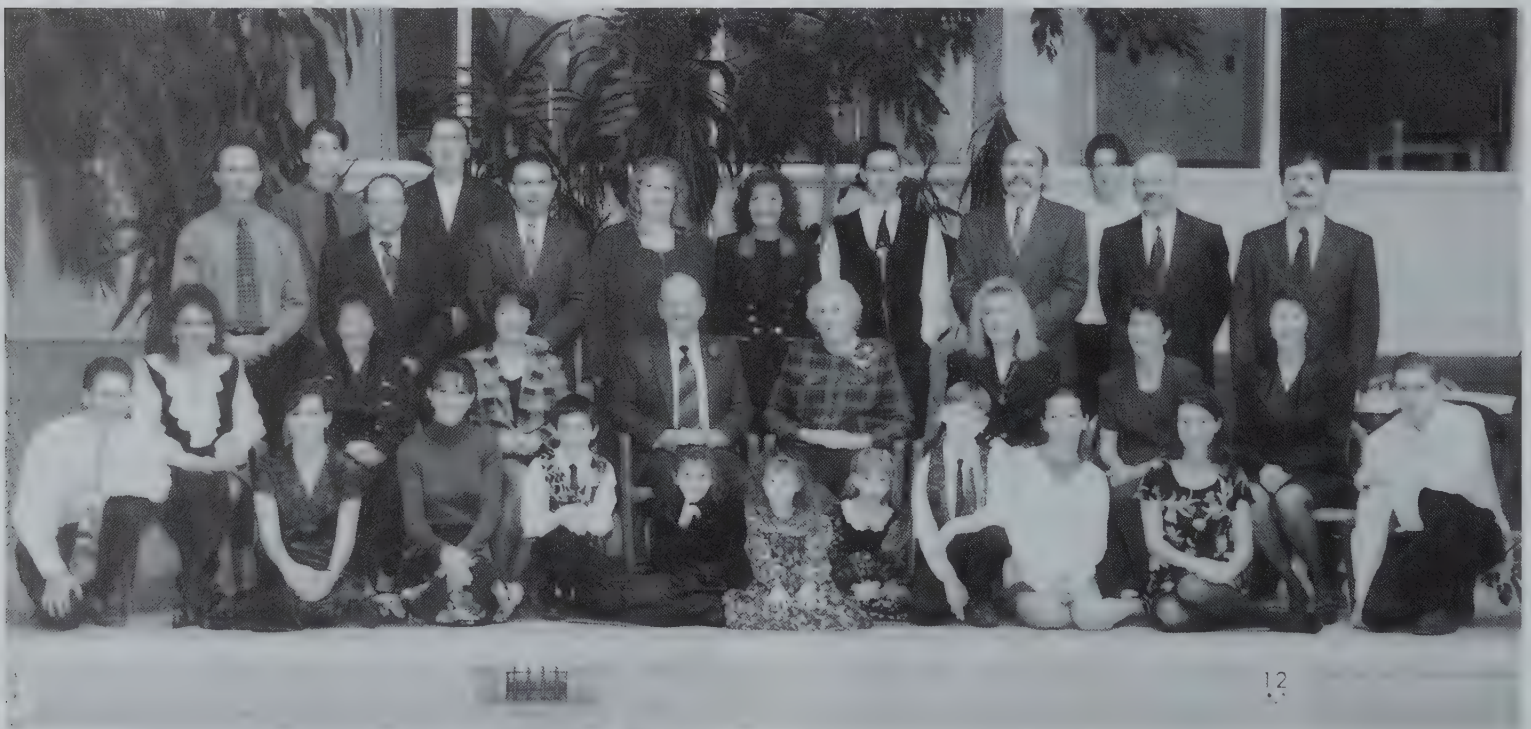
Our family history in the Mearns district goes back to both my grandfathers, my dad and, in later years, me.

My grandparents, John and Mary Stevens, came to the area in 1914 from Canistota, South Dakota and bought land four and a half miles southwest of Mearns. In 1917 they purchased the SW 21-51-26-W4 for twelve hundred dollars from John Lutz, Joe and Andrew's grandfather. It was located about a mile southwest

of Mearns, directly south of Steve Polakovits' home quarter. With the purchase of this land, our family had a closer connection to the Mearns community.

Grandfather had a barn built on the southwest corner of the quarter by his brother-in-law, John Franz. In the summer of 1914 he had built a complete farmstead for my grandparents on their farm. He had come to Alberta in 1909 and built an impressive farmstead for Nick Perrott a mile north of Riviere Qui Barre. One of the last barns he built was for Kenneth McGillis of the Ray district in 1926, which considering it's age is in excellent condition.

Grandfather pastured cattle on the Mearns quarter in the spring and in the fall. He was issued a



Thomas Jr. and Olga Spargo on their 50th Wedding Anniversary.

cattle brand in 1917; we still have his old branding iron and have lifetime membership of his registered brand.

On November 15, 1917, he was elected secretary of the first UGG local board in Morinville, a position he held till he passed away in 1925. Mr. Cloutier told me that grandfather resembled a minister when he was out in public; grandmother must have used lots of starch on his collars.

In 1918 he received a sub-dealership for Overland cars. John North Willys was head of the company and they had manufactured one hundred and forty thousand cars in 1917. They were priced at five hundred dollars; they hoped to give Henry Ford lots of competition. At one time Walter Chrysler worked for the company. The Willys Jeep sold by Chrysler today had its origin from the Overland car. One of his customers was Mr. William Kieser Sr.; Herman told me when his dad took the car to the city he always covered it up with a canvass while he was in Edmonton.

In 1925 Dad (John Stevens) took over as secretary of the local UGG board. Shortly afterward the UGG elevator in Morinville was torn down and moved to Mearns, becoming an integral part of the community. Dad was secretary of the Mearns and later Morinville local for forty-nine years until he resigned in 1974.

In 1940 he was elected to the board of directors of UGG. He managed to get elected many more times and was still on the board of directors when he passed away in 1974. He helped organize the Mearns Rural Electric Association and served as president for a few years. He also played baseball with the Mearns team in 1932.

In 1940 he bought a pull type Massey Harris combine from Allen Mills, one of the first Massey Harris combines in the area. Our neighbor Delphis Bourbonnais came over and said to Dad, "John what are you doing laying all your grain on the ground?" I guess Dad had some grain in swaths that he had cut with the binder ready to be combined. Dad would buy many more Massey combines from Allan, however his favorite was the model twenty-one which was one of Massey's earlier self-propel combines.

Dad had seen a lot of progress in tractor manufacturing in his life. My grandfather had a three wheel Case 10-20 tractor, which we think he bought around 1917 for nine hundred dollars. It had a ten horsepower draw bar rating with a twenty horsepower belt rating. The only restored one I am aware of is at the Stan Reynolds museum in Wetaskiwin.

In the late twenties Dad traded the old three wheel Case for a John Deere D with steel wheels.

His new John Deere had fifteen horsepower rating on the draw bar and twenty seven on the pulley. Albert Miller, former John Deere dealer at Westlock, said that the D sold for around twelve hundred dollars in the nineteen twenties. In 1942 Dad purchased a Massey Harris 101 from Allen Mills and was now into modern farming with a rubber-tired tractor. Dad bought a six-foot Massey tiller with a seeder box from Allen. He did the majority of his seeding with his new tiller. He installed lights on the 101 Massey and ran it around the clock while seeding in the spring.

My maternal grandfather, Tom McNamara, came to the Riviere Qui Barre area with his parents from Kimeo, Kansas in 1895. At the time he was a tobacco chewing, sixteen-year-old teenager who had only been able to attend school for three years. His first job in Alberta was working for Hagemanns who owned the Walter and Mary Ellett farm later purchased by Joe and Dorothy Kluthe. Hagemanns were from Germany and I think started farming there about 1890.

In the Decades of the Independence District history book, Eva McKittrick wrote that Mrs. Hagemann spoke only German and was one of the few white ladies in the district prior to 1900. She also said that Mrs. Hagemann had visited her parents' homestead in 1893, which was two miles north of Riviere Qui Barre. This farm was later owned by the Timneys who built quite a large home on it. It was later purchased by Bob and Connie Como who built a new home after the original home was destroyed by fire in 1946. Joyce and I rented their former home for two years after we got married in 1964.

One story Grandpa told me was how they milked a lot of cows and shipped cream. However, they had only one cream separator so to solve their problem they had many containers scattered around with milk in waiting for the cream to rise to the top. Their many cats always let them know which ones were ready to be strained. Another story he told was of all the wet land north of their farm and in the summer how they used to run their cattle up to where Mearns is now located.

Around 1900, the Hagemanns sold out and moved to California. Grandpa then went to work on a survey crew at Fort Assinboine for the Grand Trunk Railroad. However, his connection with the Mearns district continued. He was a member of the Mearns local of UGG board in the late 1930's and early 40's. He was also a councilor for the municipal district of Ray, which had its office in St. Albert. The north boundary of his area was two and a half miles south of Mearns. His total salary for 1930 was

one hundred and eighty dollars. In those days they hired farmers to maintain most of the roads.

The last year that Grandpa ran for council, it was a tied vote and the returning officer cast his vote for Grandpa's opponent. However, the moral of the story is how my Aunt Margaret, his oldest daughter, hadn't bothered to vote. This fortifies the argument that every vote always counts. In later years, Grandpa maintained his interest in road building.

I well remember one occasion I was with him when they were high grading the Morinville Road (642). They were just east of the Ed Borle farm now owned by Vic and Pat Boddez. The elevator grader and cat were parked at a precarious angle on the hill. Grandpa's neighbor, Eugene Hoffle, who had one glass eye, was operating the cat. Somehow an accident was avoided and the road eventually did get finished.

Another trip I made regularly with Grandpa was to Spargo Bros. in Alcomdale to pay his car insurance. John Spargo held court in what to me, at the time, seemed to be a very small, dark office somewhere behind the main counter. Our highlight of the trip to Alcomdale was stopping at Libke's store for a treat on the way home. The two things I remember most about the store is the big block of round cheese on the counter and looking through the door into their living quarters and seeing Mrs Libke's yellow canary in it's cage.

In 1957, Grandpa, at the age of seventy-seven, sold his half section of "Qui Barre gumbo" as he called it and retired. My grandparents spent their last years living in a small home on the farm of Mike and Margaret Fitzgerald, two and a half miles south of Mearns. In December of 1967 Grandpa passed away while watching television, still chewing tobacco and wearing his trade mark long woolen underwear. His funeral services were held at Mearns, not far from where he started out life in Alberta as a teenager.

My own involvement with Mearns community began at a young age when I used to go with Dad to the local UGG elevator. Doyle Cochlin was elevator manager then, having been at Mearns since 1932. I think in about 1941 Dad raised some flax and hauled it directly in sacks to a rail car at Mearns. In between loads, a train came through and moved the car and some of the sacks shifted, which at the time seemed like a big deal to a five year old kid. Going to Emile Nobert's store for a treat after visiting the elevator was always a highlight of our trip to Mearns.

In 1948 our local school, Belle Valley School, was moved approximately four miles northeast to Mearns. With the move, our world changed dramatically. Dan Sheehan's bus was how we got to

school and the good Sisters became our teachers. Interestingly, the only item to survive my school days is a scribbler from Sister Mary Edwards' grade VII religion class. Its neatness astounds me; all the credit must go to Sister's dedication to her profession.

In grade eight, which was my last year at Mearns, my teacher was Justine Hittinger, who also had been my grade one teacher at Belle Valley. I can still vividly remember attending my first Christmas concert at St. Charles. I was overwhelmed at what appeared to me the hundreds of people seated in the basement of the church.

I also got a good lesson in life when we were playing softball one Saturday at Mearns during grade eight. I had ridden my bike to Mearns and when returning home I noticed I forgot a new pair of hand made native gloves, a gift from my Aunt Margaret at Fort St. John. My parents made me ride the eight mile round trip back on my bike. I arrived home just before dark with my forgotten gloves and a lesson well learned.

I have good memories of the great neighbors we had at our Mearns farm. The O'Neill's were our closest neighbors, being right across the road from our land. Mrs. O'Neill was a very gracious host; she seemed to always have some of her excellent baking on hand. The rest of the neighbors we usually visited with across the fence when we were working in the field.

Immediately north of the O'Neill farm was the east quarter of the land that Art Gill farmed. When Art was working his summer fallow, he always had time to stop and visit. He would refill his trademark pipe and head back to his Case L steel wheel tractor. On occasion, Archie Cameron used to stop by with his truck loaded with livestock on the way to the city and pick up Art.

North of Art's was Clarence Duncan's farm, with his round bales from his Allis Chalmers baler. Clarence was a good stockman and raised a lot of sheep. I can still recall, as a preschooler, seeing his saddle horse all decked out and tied up to the hitching post in front of Chalifoux's store at the end of main street in Morinville.

Mike and Annie Wills owned the land immediately south of us. Mike always had time to visit when working across the fence with his 101 Massey tractor and six-foot tiller. Mike's north quarter had a huge wet area and I have good memories of hunting ducks there with Leo Falls and Connie Bourbonnais.

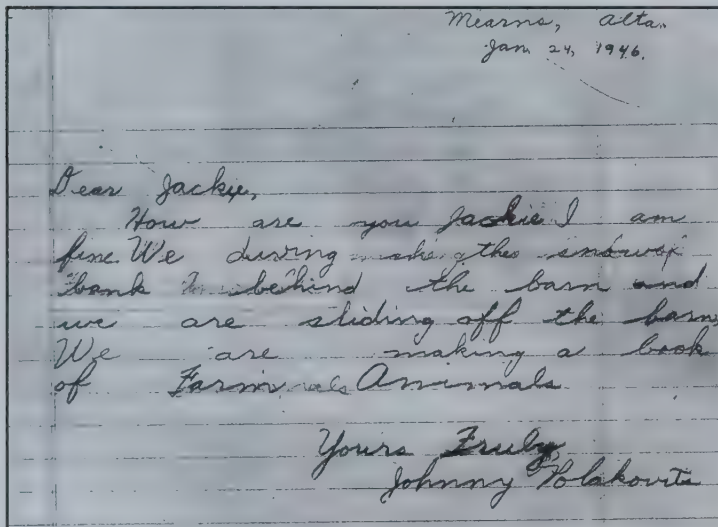
To the east of our land was Edgar and Margaret Ellett's west quarter. Edgar had a John Deere D tractor and always carried his English wine, as he called it, with him when working in the field.

Actually it was supposed to be iced tea, however the old John Deere tractor kept it very warm.

The Polakovits were our neighbors to the north. I was always convinced that Steve harrowed his summer fallow in high gear, however, when you are fifteen years old perception is always a long ways from reality.

During our Belle Valley school days Johnny and I spent many summer days searching for bird eggs to add to our collections. I recall, on one occasion, we circled Fraser Lake in two or three feet of water looking for mud hen nests. I don't recall any dire consequences when we got home; our clothes must have been dry by then. I will always remember Mrs. Polakovits bringing up her white enamel pitcher full of cold milk from the basement when Johnny and I got back from our escapades.

Another item to survive our school days was some class letters that I received in January of 1946 during a three-week hospital stay. One of these is from Johnny Polakovits and indicates we made our own entertainment in those days.



Letter from school buddy while in hospital – 1946

Enclosed are two photos showing putting up slough hay on the Mearns quarter. The first photo was taken in 1949; by the clothes we are wearing it had to be late fall. Shown in the photo are Dad, Pat Borle and a green looking thirteen-year old kid operating the tractor. I would have the privilege of many more years operating the WD9. Dad had bought the WD9 tractor in 1946 from Soetaert and Kramer in Morinville for thirty seven hundred dollars. The WD9 had arm strong steering and a Paul Bunion clutch; no wonder I enjoyed taking a break and visiting with the neighbors across the fence.

The next photo, taken in 1955, shows making hay the easy way on our Mearns land. Pictured on the hay sweep are my grandfather, Tom McNamara, and myself on the tractor. Dad had bought a 1953



Haying, 1949. Jack Stevens on tractor, John Stevens on haystack and Pat Borle pitching hay up onto the stack



Haying, 1955. Grandpa McNamara on hay sweep

Jubilee Ford tractor with a Farmhand loader. It was the first hydraulics on the Stevens Farm. Grandpa was seventy-five years old at the time and was helping us, still wearing his trademark long woolen underwear. He considered making hay this way rocket science compared to using a team of horses with hayrack and pitchfork.

In 1960 our land was sold to John and Joan Polakovits, one of the great neighbors we had during our farming years at Mearns.

Joyce and I sold our dream retirement home at Sandy Lake in the spring of 2006 and moved to St. Albert to be closer to our family.

Our oldest daughter, Cathy, lives in Cardiff Echoes and is married to Kevin Laliberte who is with the town of Morinville. They have two boys, Joe and Josh. Cathy has been teaching elementary grades at Vanier School in Morinville for the past twenty years. Our son, John, lives in St. Albert and is married to Maria Jensen who is Secretary Treasurer of the St. Albert Catholic School Board. They have four children, Kayla, Grace, Jordan and Justin. John is President and Chief Operating Officer of Northern Crane Services Inc. of Edmonton. Tracy lives in St. Albert and is married to Brad Delhez who is with the Workers' Compensation Board. They have two boys,



Jack & Joyce Stevens with their children and ten of their eleven grandchildren: Back row, L to R: Kevin, Cathy, Grace, Jacki, John, Maria, Tracy and Brad. Third row, L to R: Josh and Cameron. Second row: Joe, Cory, Jack, Erica, Joyce, Jordan and Kayla. Front row: Cole, Ethan and Justin



Jack Stevens Family – Back row: Cathy, Jacki, John and Tracy. Front row: Jack & Joyce

Cameron and Ethan. Tracy is presently teaching Junior High at Richard Flower School in St. Albert. Jacki lives in St. Albert and is married to Cory Beattie who is the Controller for Reid Built Homes of Edmonton. They have three children, Cole, Erica and Nicholas. Jacki is the Controller and Vice President of Finance for the Brick in Edmonton.

Stevens, Harvey & Mary (Molly)
Knowles, Jack
Nisbet Tom and Bob Families
 By Tom Nisbet

A Kaleidoscope of Childhood Memories

Alcomdale in the mid 1940's has many vivid and lasting childhood memories for me. It was an exciting, thriving community – the school, the stores and post office and the people. There was the Mills garage, the grain elevators and, of course, the train. The arrival of the train was an exciting event – the noise, the steam and all of the moving parts. It was a great opportunity to put pennies on the track just before the train arrived and admire the flattened masterpieces later.

Coming to town was always exciting. Aside from the merchants, you never knew whom you would meet and what you would learn. I remember listening with awe to the adult conversations about the weather, crops, the war, rationing, and purple gas. If we were lucky we would buy a candy treat for the way home!



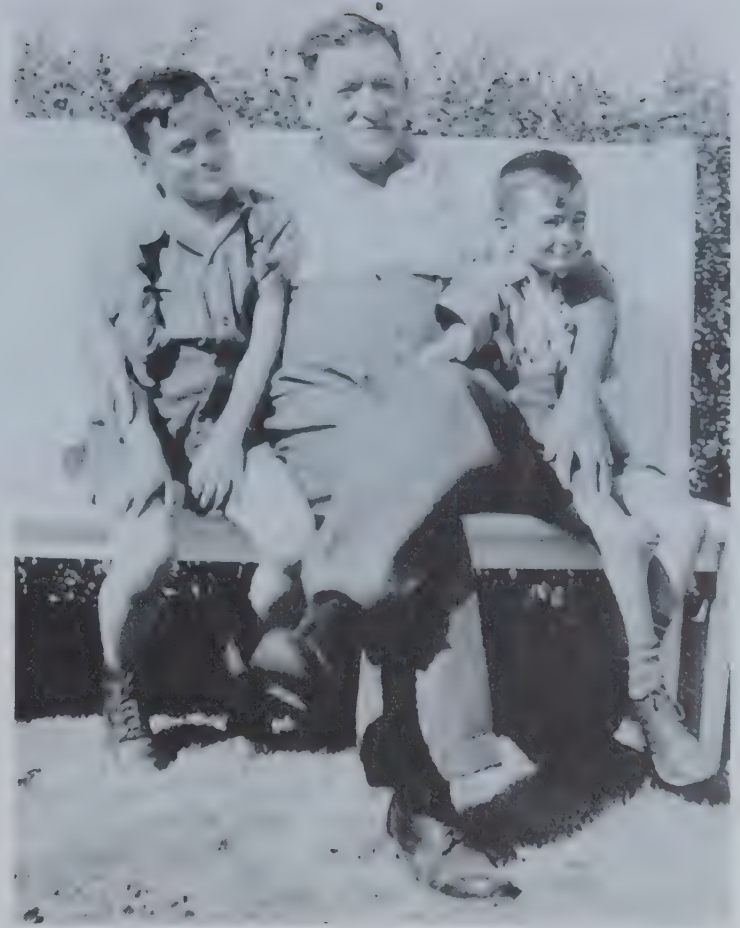
Mary & Harvey Stevens, Jack Knowles – “Sunday Relaxation” – circa 1945

I remember the wonder of Mr. Libke’s store – the endless supply of grocery and other items and electric power from a windcharger and storage batteries! Ice cream cones were a special treat... mmmm... so good. We frequently had dry ice to play with from the store. The Whitson store was a special attraction because it housed the post office and the arrival of the mail was always awaited with much anticipation.

My brother Bob and I lived with the Stevens family and Jack Knowles lived on a farm two miles south of Alcomdale on what is now Highway #44 (legal description SE¼ and NE¼ -30-56-24-W4). The Stevens bought the land in 1923 and sold it to the Warshawski family in 1948. The land is now the farmstead site of the Hutterite Brethren Church of Morinville.

New England School Days

I started school in 1942 in a one-room building with a well in the yard and a barn in the back for those students who traveled by horse. Grade one students were in the row next to the windows, grade two in the next row, grade three in the next row and so on. In winter, a large potbelly stove in the centre of the room provided a roaring fire. Occasionally



Tom & Bob Nisbet – “A Visit from Dad” – 1945

there were “mysterious” explosions from 22 short cartridges thrown into the fire when the teacher wasn’t looking. Can you imagine the fuss – the investigations, the press – if that had happened today? Spring and early summer brought out the gophers (Richardson ground squirrels as they are now known) and the opportunity to pump water down the gopher holes, forcing them to come out and be caught by a waiting snare. Then it was time to chase the girls with the gophers. The sloughs by the railway tracks were a great place to make rafts from railway ties and launch them on their “dangerous” voyage across to the other side (in the true spirit of Tom Sawyer on the Mississippi).

And we all can remember our favourite teachers – like Miss (Helen) Klapouschak and her sister, Pauline. They shook up the school board and got us a hockey rink, and sports equipment. They were excellent teachers with strong discipline. I remember things like spelling bees, memorizing all 48 States in the U.S (Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, etc.). We must have learned the (then) nine provinces in Canada and their capital cities but somehow this task didn’t stand out!

Preparation for the Christmas concert seemed to start in October – maybe it did! There were endless rehearsals – and the result was a production masterpiece for parents just before Christmas. The



The Stevens' Farmstead – "A Floral & Horticultural Showcase" – circa 1945

Kitchen Orchestra was a feature: making "music" with all sorts of kitchen utensils, forks, spoons, pots and pans. We had pop bottles filled to varying levels of water that, when struck, produced different notes – a great audience pleaser. One year my brother Bob (at age seven) was the music director, using a wooden spoon as a baton and bowing to the audience at the end of the performance! He did a great job.

Miss Klapouschak began offering piano lessons (paid for in part with butter and other produce) so I started piano lessons one year. Since we didn't have a piano and we weren't about to make a major investment for unproven talent, the Gill family kindly offered practice sessions at their home. Alas, my musical talents were far too limited and piano playing fell by the wayside (verifying the decision not to purchase a piano!)

The kids at school were special. Most days we walked to and from school with the Mollenkopfs, Walter, Margaret and Hedy, and later rode the school bus with Richard Friedrich. There were the Lipke girls: Pearl, Grace and Ivy; Barbara Gill; Phyllis Jaworsky; Patsy Whitson; Henry Warunki; Evan Cameron; The Harringtons: Betty, Eugene and Lucille; the Meakins; the Mills girls; the VanHoves and many others (apologies to persons that I am sure I missed).

The Farm

Like most kids, we had chores at home. There were animals to be fed – pigs, chickens, horses, cows and calves – and barns to be cleaned. One of my chores was helping with milking the two cows morning and evening. The barn was a place of refuge in the winter, a shelter from the wind and cold and warmed by the body heat of the animals. Coal oil lanterns glowed eerily in the late afternoon and early evening darkness. The farm cats were always there at milking time waiting for a squirt of

warm milk. Sport, our Collie dog, was a great friend and companion and we always had fun rounding up the cows and bringing them to the barn for milking.

My brother Bob and I "owned" our first farm animals when I was seven and Bob was five. We were each given a "runt" pig to feed and care for. We gave them special feed and attention every day and they brought a good price at market. We made a special trip to the bank to deposit the money.

There were special preparations in the fall: cutting and stacking wood, ordering coal from the Egg Lake Coal Company, butchering a pig or veal in preparation for winter, fresh meat for a few days then the canning operation and putting up the storm windows. The house was built under the direction of Master Carpenter, Jack Knowles, and was an energy efficient leader for its day – it had double air spaced exterior walls to provide insulation!

Harvest was especially exciting. There was the cutting of the grain with the binder (sometimes horse pulled, later with the Oliver 80 tractor) and learning to stook. The arrival of the threshing machine with the "huge" threshing crews brought a new life to the farm. Random memories include: bundle teams; the movement of the endless belts and pulleys of the threshing machine; the rhythmic noise of the equipment and the smell of fresh straw in the pile at the end of the machine. There were tea breaks in the morning and afternoon and lots of sandwiches. There was always a beehive of activity in the kitchen; a huge table with meat, potatoes and vegetables piled high, seemingly three times a day. There was always fresh baked bread and pies for dessert. It was so quiet after the crew left.

Spring had a different kind of excitement: the reawakening of nature; longer hours of daylight; water rushing in the ditches and creeks; mud everywhere as the frost came out; frogs croaking; birds singing; the arrival of the robins and the first

honking of geese heading north. The chicken coop had to be thoroughly cleaned and white washed in preparation for the arrival of the day old chicks. The coal fired brooder had to be carefully tended to so that the temperature was neither too warm nor too cold.

Summer was haying time, summer fallowing, weeding and cultivating the garden and enjoying the fresh vegetables. It was a real treat when we traveled to Lac la Nonne, fishing for pike and learning to swim.

The War

The war was a regular part of the conversation among our parents, friends and neighbors. Topics included: reports of victories on the various fronts; war savings certificates; sugar rationing; ration stamps and purple gasoline. There were classroom messages to waste nothing, for example "Be sure to eat all the crusts of the sandwiches". At the time, it was hard to figure out exactly how one crust of bread eaten or not eaten would help a far away soldier. I remember the day in May 1945 when a neighbor phoned the house to spread the news that the war in Europe was over.

A Short History of the Farm

In the early 1890's, Nester Noel and his brother Norbert lived on the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 30, Tsp. 56, W of the 4th meridian, (in the "Provincial District of Alberta, in the North West Territories, in the Dominion of Canada"). In 1897 Nester Noel obtained title to this quarter.

The same year, his brother Norbert applied for a homestead patent on the SE $\frac{1}{4}$. The Homestead Inspector's report of 12th of August, 1897 reports an 18x 20 log house valued at \$25.00 with a dirt roof (not yet finished), 3 horses, 6 head of cattle, poplar rail fencing and the opinion of the Inspector that there were 60 acres fit for cultivation. The report concludes that Mr. Noel was a "bona fide settler" and his application was approved. He owned the farm until 1920. Nicholas J. Perrott owned the land from about 1920 to 1923 when the Stevens purchased it from his estate.

The Stevens, Knowles, Nisbets and Simes

The Nisbet family is the common thread linking the Stevens, Knowles and Simes (Bill and Sarah Sime farmed at Independence in the late 1940's and early 1950's). All have a link to Alcomdale and Independence.

Harvey (John Harvey) Stevens was born in Dunville, Ontario, the son of a harness maker. He, like many others, was attracted by the lure of adventure and opportunity in the west and as a young man worked at various farm jobs, first in Manitoba and later in Alberta. One of his employers was the Nisbet family, recent arrivals from Scotland

and newly settled (1910) in the Clover Bar district, east of Edmonton. The Nisbet family in 1910 was composed of Mrs. Christina Nisbet (widowed in 1901) and her five children: Cissy age 25; Mary (Molly) age 23; George age 21; Nettie age 19 and James age 14.

Harvey Stevens married Molly Nisbet in 1914 and they farmed at Ohaton, east of Camrose, before moving to Alcomdale in 1923. Cissy married Jack Knowles, master carpenter and farmer, and they lived at Independence for a time (NW $\frac{1}{4}$ Section 34 Range 27, West of the 4th meridian). However, it was not a happy marriage and Jack moved to Vancouver. Cissy continued to farm until her death in 1937. Jack then returned to Alcomdale and at the invitation of Harvey and Molly, lived with them.

George married Florence McGillivray, a schoolteacher at North Clover Bar School and they became our parents. Our mother died when I was five years old and Bob was two and a half. Shortly thereafter, we came to live with the Stevens. I started school at Alcomdale in 1942 and Bob started two years later.

Nettie married William Sime, a marine engineer and farmer. Their youngest son Bill and his wife Sarah farmed at Independence after the war until the early 1950's (the same quarter farmed by the Knowles).

James married Blanche Casey of Fort Saskatchewan and they farmed west of Independence for some years – about 1930.

Life in the Stevens/Knowles Household

Life in the Stevens household was filled with many fond memories. The Stevens opened their hearts to Bob and I, readily responding to the tragic and premature death of our mother and filling an urgent need (what is to happen to these two young boys who have just lost their mother; how will their dad cope with all of the responsibilities of raising two boys and farming at the same time?). They made a commitment to us at a time when Harvey was 60 and Mary was 55 and they were considering retirement in a few years. Was this the time in their life when they wanted to take on the responsibility of raising two young boys? They made the commitment, unconditionally, and became wonderful, caring surrogate parents. Dad was a regular visitor to Alcomdale and we visited his farm as often as we could.

It was a happy household with ready laughter and stories. Harvey's infectious laugh, Molly's Scottish brogue and bright eyes and Jack's ready smile. Like many households of the day, the family had been affected and influenced by the 1930's depression. Saving was the order of the day and any



Tom & Myrna Nisbet Family – circa 2005. Back row: daughter, Nancy, son, Allan, daughter-in-law, Kumiko. Center row: Tom & Myrna. Front row: grandchildren, Anna & Kent

sort of extravagance was out. (Of course, with the strong Scottish background, the concept of “waste not want not” was genetic!). We didn’t have much money but it didn’t matter, we were warm, well fed and clothed in a loving, caring household.

In addition to our farm chores, Aunt Molly ensured that we had a well-rounded practical education. We had to make our beds every day and keep our rooms tidy. On Saturdays we had “dusting” to do; we hated it. We also learned to darn socks and iron shirts.

A Floral and Horticultural Showcase

The farmstead was known for miles around as a floral and horticultural showcase. Passers by slowed or stopped to view the colourful expanse. Harvey looked after the vegetable garden and Jack took charge of the flowers and shrubs. Windbreaks were planted – Manitoba maple, from Indian Head Saskatchewan, blue spruce and caragana hedges.

Like most farms of the day, a large and well cared for vegetable garden was essential to ensure that the family was well fed through the winter.

The visual highlight though was the flower garden. Jack would spend the winters pouring through the seed catalogues, planning for the next year. The perennials were a standout with double-dug soil (hand dug flower beds, two shovel lengths deep) and fortified with chicken manure.



Bob & Marilyn Nisbet Family – circa 2004. Top left: Dale & Jennifer with sons Tyler and Alex. Top right: Grant & Carrie with daughter Natasha and son Markus; Center: Bob & Marilyn Nisbet. Bottom left: Dean with sons Cody and Madison. Bottom right: Richard & Anita Tougas with children Connor and Carly.

The Move to Cloverdale in the Fraser Valley

The family moved to an acreage near Cloverdale in 1948. The move was one of mixed emotions: the excitement of a new home in a new province but knowing that we would miss friends and neighbors. Random memories here include: Building the furniture crates, loading the boxcar in Alcomdale, the car in one end of the rail car and the furniture in the other end. There were sad goodbyes to classmates, friends and neighbors. I remember well the excitement of the trip to Vancouver. We stayed overnight at the Lincoln Hotel in Edmonton and departed by train for Vancouver the next morning.

Up-date: Tom and Bob Nisbet

Tom is a retired Management Consultant. He and his wife Myrna live in Edmonton. They have two adult children, Allan and Nancy.

Bob and his wife Marilyn are semi-retired restaurateurs. They live in Fort Saskatchewan and have four adult children: Dale, Grant, Dean and Anita (Tougas).

Stewart, Brian & Brenda (Tomten)

Brenda Tomten, the second child of James and Selma Tomten, graduated from Paul Kane High School in 1974. She moved to Edmonton and worked at the Alberta Treasury Branch.

She married, Brian Stewart, August 13, 1977. She had met Brian when they were in junior high at Camilla School. Brian's family moved to the area from Grande Prairie. Shortly after their marriage, they bought a mobile home and set it up on the Jim Mitchel yard site, west of Alcomdale. James and Selma had bought that quarter years before and James had subdivided the old yard site off the quarter. A year later on October 1, 1978, Brian and Brenda welcomed their baby boy, Cody into the world. Two years later on June 29, 1980, daughter Angela was born. Also in 1980, they purchased the acreage from James and Selma, and with the help of family and friends, they built a house.

At that time Brian was a welder and had his own welding rig. A recession had hit and times were lean and tough. There were no jobs to be had. Brenda stayed home, raising the children and doing some part time work at the Scotia Bank in Morinville, and when James and Selma went away on winter vacations with their motor home, Brenda was their substitute school bus driver. In 1984 Brenda bought a school bus from James and had the route from west of Alcomdale to Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre. Cody was in grade one that year and rode on Brenda's bus while Ann Fulton babysat Angie.

Brenda continued to drive school bus and work

part time between buses at the Scotia Bank and Brian worked for Stel Marr Concrete as a manager. Through the school years, Cody played hockey for Riviere Qui Barre and later for Legal. He also played soccer for the Alcomdale soccer team. Angie was involved in the Double Diamond 4-H Club, Busby Gymkhana Club and Team Penning. She had definitely found her true love – horses. It was a busy time for all!

In 1993, Brian started his own business, Abacus Enterprises Inc. What started out as a one truck and one backhoe operation out of their home has now grown into a thriving business located in the Morinville Industrial Park. Brenda hired a driver for her school bus and went back to work full-time at the Scotia Bank in 1995. Brenda joined the Abacus team in 1998 and, together, Brenda and Brian employ 33 people and service the oil field industry. Brenda sold her bus and route in 2004 to her brother Kevin.



Photo taken at Lindsay and Cody's wedding. L to R: Brenda Stewart, Kelsey and Angie Hosack, Lindsay and Cody Stewart, Brian Stewart. In front, Karyssa Hosack

On August 10, 2002, Angie married Kelsy Hosack. They have two beautiful daughters, Karyssa Jordyn, born January 27, 2004 and Janessa Delaine, born July 2, 2006. On August 27, 2005, Cody married Lindsay Skipper and they were blessed with a daughter, Emily Katelyn on January 10, 2007.

After struggling with the decision for a long time, Brian and Brenda decided to move from their home in the Alcomdale area and build a new home just outside of Morinville to be closer to their business. They were pleased when Angie and Kelsy chose to buy the house that had been Angie's childhood home and make Alcomdale their home. Since February 2003, Brenda and Brian have enjoyed their new home and still maintain

relationships with friends and family from the Alcomdale area.

Angie, being true to her love of animals, now raises Yorkshire terrier and shih tzu puppies and (of course) has several horses. She started Karyssa in the Busby Gymkhana Club at the age of two and a half and she continues to train and compete in several different horse activities. Angie works part time at Abacus Enterprises as a junior safety officer. Kelsy is a parts person and works in Edmonton.

Cody and Linsay reside on an acreage in the Morinville area. Cody works full time for Abacus Enterprises as a site supervisor and purchaser. He continues to play hockey for Legal in the “beer league”. Linsay is a pharmaceutical assistant and works in Edmonton.

With fondness, Brenda remembers the simple life of her childhood. There was lots of hard work and she remembers being told that straw was “gold”, so don’t cut the corners short when bailing; and the smell of pig manure was the smell of money!

All the children were expected to work on the farm. There was gardening, weeding, picking raspberries and vegetables, working in the field, feeding the cows and pigs, and cleaning barns. Brenda learned to drive a standard truck at the age of 12 and by 14 she was driving a three-ton truck loaded with hay from the hay land to the home place.

It wasn’t all work, however, there was a lot of fun too! When the family was young, James would put a tarp over the box of the grain truck, throw in a couple of mattresses and other necessities, and we would head to the lake for a weekend. It was a great adventure.

We did a lot of visiting and on many Sundays we would either have company or go to visit family or neighbors. Selma would prepare a meal at a moments notice for any company that happened to

stop by. She was a great cook and we ate well. James sometimes complained that she fed us too well as he struggled to keep his weight down.

There was music in our house – James played the guitar and Elaine played the piano. Elaine and Brenda would occasionally sing at church and when company came over it was inevitable that the guitar would come out. Many a night there was a sing-along happening at our house.

There were the picnics in Alcomdale, which were quite exciting for the Tomten children. We were each given some money to spend and I don’t think we ever came home with any left. There were races, games and a chance to win prizes, and best of all, there was the concession booth where you could eat all the junk food that you could afford. Brenda even remembers getting sick once from eating too much. Brenda remembers the Christmas concerts in the Alcomdale Hall that included a visit from Santa. One year, she recognized that Santa was her dad by his shoes!



Kelsy, Angie, Karyssa and Janessa Hosack

As an adult, living in the community brought Brenda and Brian a real sense of being connected to the people of the community. There were the kind hugs at Selma’s funeral, which gave a lot of comfort. As the people in the community age, one can see generation after generation and it gives all of us a sense of belonging.

Brenda sometimes misses not being part of the Alcomdale community. It’s nice to know the people you meet on the road and see a smile and a wave as you pass them. Brenda and Brian also miss the quiet. They used to sit out on their back patio around the fire pit after work on a Friday night. It would be so quiet you could hear the flies buzzing, a cow mooing a mile away, or a car traveling down the road. Once it got dark, they could pick out the neighbors’ yards by their lights and knew who lived



Cody, Linsay and Emily Stewart

there. It is wonderful that Angie, Kelsy and their family continue to live in the Alcomdale community and enjoy these simple things.

Stitsen, Anthony & Claire (Kieser)

By Claire Stitsen



Tony and Claire (Kieser) Stitsen on their wedding day November 1970

My husband Tony and I were married in my hometown parish of St. Charles Mearns on a very cold and blustery day, November 20, 1970. The roads and highways were treacherously icy and my family had difficulty driving west up Fraser hill toward the church for the wedding mass. Tony's introduction to me and our connection to each other began years before as we both unknowingly graced the doors of that same parish church, he from a different town, in an unknown but always constant presence which would unfold as time went on.

Tony felt very much at home visiting St. Charles Parish, as it was the home parish of his mother, Mary Byer, his grandparents Nick and Mary Byer,

and his great grandparents, Lorenz and Maria Byer. Tony's home parish was now at St. Anthony's Busby, which was considered a mission parish of Mearns. Many of their main masses for special occasions or Feast Days were often held at Mearns. Therefore Tony made his Confirmation at Mearns and attended Mass there when it was not scheduled at Busby. The same School Sisters of Notre Dame who taught school at Mearns also would teach Catechism at Busby church on Sundays after late mass, as there was no Catholic school in the town.

My parents moved to Mearns from the Volmer area in the spring of 1959, purchasing the quarter of land previously owned by Mrs. Beaudry and Mrs. McLeod. Later we purchased the adjoining quarter from Rottots.

We visited often with many of the neighbors, Kluthes, Lirondelles, Schafers, Vandenhoutens, and Bugnets. Our families shared simple fun, watching home movies at the Schafer's, playing games, skating, or just sitting on the wooden cellar steps at the neighbor's house watching the mechanism that produced and refined the refreshments the adults were making. These days were truly happy childhood memories.

Our family, as did others, spent a lot of time working together in the field, in the garden, picking berries in the summer, or fixing fences. Dad was always either fixing or building in the neighborhood. He built granaries, a hip roof barn, a turkey barn, and in future years he built many of his children's houses, hog barns, a senior's lodge, Web Construction homes, and our own dairy barn, which was his greatest challenge.

Mom seldom had a free moment either. We had no running water to begin with, or power or a phone for that matter. So everything was done running for it herself; from the pump to the woodpile, and from the chamber pots and five gallon pail to the field. Mom worked alongside Dad, milking, fixing fences, cleaning barns, shooting weasels that were killing her hens, or shooting magpies that were scavenging her strawberries. Mom loved gardens and flowerbeds. Anything that attacked her lawn or garden was considered the enemy. She probably would have taken first prize in the county for trapping the highest amount of moles in the past 50 years. While into her 80's she was still digging mole runways and trapping until she and Dad moved off the farm in 2006.

Our family began to grow and we soon outgrew the small house on the farm. In 1965 dad hired Richard Vandenhouten to dig a new basement for the old house with an addition of three bedrooms. Dad hired Lupul Movers to move our little house on

the new foundation. The neighbors all came to watch and brought picnic lunches to share. I stayed in the house during the move so that none of mom's good dishes would fall from the cupboards. Soon thereafter we would have a real bathroom with flush toilet and a bathtub with a drain.

School days were always fun. Winter times were a little more challenging. Our lane was the longest on the bus route at a quarter mile long. I had great bus drivers while I was at school: Dan Sheehan, John Polakovits, Maurice Bugnet and Alex Brenneis. Working in a school now gives me a special appreciation for bus drivers and teachers.

School days began with the Sisters leading us in prayer, O Canada and God Save the Queen. In the winter at noon hour recess we rushed out to skate when we could and play Crack-the-Whip and Train Track. When it was really cold we played ping-pong and had tournaments in the basement of the school.

We looked forward to school parties especially Valentines and Christmas, when we would all bring baking. In the higher grades we had dances with the Sister's choice of music from records.

The Sisters provided us with a wonderful array of music and encouraged us with song. Singing accompanied with piano, organ, or sing along records was always lots of fun. We did a lot of singing with three part harmony, alto, soprano, and descant. We were able to join the choir in grade four. That was the ultimate wait period for a young girl to be able to go to the choir loft at church. Some songs and responses were in Latin. The Sisters taught us how to pronounce and enunciate all the words and prayers. Choir practices were often held in the red brick high school building. The choir was expected to sing for marriages, funerals, confirmation and first communions. Mearns always had 30 to 40 girls in the choir at any given time. We were also able to follow the broadcasts on the radio, "Lets Sing Together" presented by the Dept. of Education in Alberta in cooperation with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. We would individually receive newsprint copies of student's song sheets and follow along. Wow, many of us sure enjoyed the change of pace in the classroom when we could become interactive with the radio. I don't know why, but the boys didn't seem to show as much excitement about these sing along times. What a challenge for the teachers then, to hold everyone's interest in a classroom where three grades were taught by one teacher.

Can any of you remember having to memorize lines during the school year and choosing poems or passages to prepare to present to the teacher? I remember lines were carefully counted because



Claire and Tony Stitsen – 2008

there was a magic number of them expected for memorization each new school year.

Spring and summer recesses were filled with Scrub, Mud-Guts, Hopscotch, swinging, teetering, visiting or sharing secrets.

The Sisters would organize Talent Shows, so practice time was set aside at school and home for play lines, poetry, building props, or chorale practice. The community came to watch these talent evenings and plays downstairs in the basement of the church. A lot of effort and time was put into these productions.

A Church Picnic in the summer with ball games, bingo, races, bottle throw, darts, and ice cream was so much fun. Chicken suppers were held in the basement of the church.

Hardships were sadly a part of community living. These sorrowful times were felt by all and compassion was shown with an outpouring of community support and prayers. Thankfully, happier times outnumbered the sad.

I attended grade nine at Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre and that same year joined the Y.C.S. (Young Christian Students) group organized by Fr. Ted Rozmahel along with adult leader Louise Brenneis. This is how I met my husband Tony. He belonged to a Youth Group in Busby and we met through his cousin, and my good friend, Carol.

I attended St. Albert High School. Not too much later we were engaged and then married at St. Charles Parish. Our wedding supper was the first to be held at the hall in Mearns, which was formerly



Tony and Claire Stitsen's family photo taken at Lorianne's wedding in August 1993. L to R: Jared, Jody, Aaron, Lorianne, Claire, Tony, Joylynn, Corinne and Lovisa

my old school. My life continued to make a full circle with that old building and would prove to do so even more throughout time.

We went on to purchase Tony's parent's farm. I continued to lead the parish Youth Group.

Tony and I were blessed with seven lovely children. Lorianne Marie was born Oct. 3, 1971, Corinne Teresa, Oct. 24, 1972, Jody Charles, Feb. 27, 1974, Joylynn Marie, Dec. 6, 1975, Aaron Emmanuel, Dec. 25, 1976, Jared Anthony, Nov. 9, 1979, and Lovisa Anne, Oct. 1, 1983. Some of the children were baptized in Mearns and received some of their sacraments such as First Communion or Confirmation in Mearns, as Busby remained a Mission parish. All of our children attended Busby Elementary School, the same school Tony had attended as a child. They then went on to attend St. Mary's Catholic School in Westlock for their Junior High and High School years. Louise Brenneis and I started the first Playschool Group in Mearns and Busby School. Our daughter Lorianne attended Playschool at Mearns Hall (school) the first year and then we brought the program to Busby. A year later I helped to organize the first Private E.C.S. Kindergarten Program. Tony and I both taught Catechism and I worked as a Rural Catechetical Coordinator and Youth Minister. We both worked on Parish Council as well. As a family we have enjoyed hosting Exchange Students from many different countries and have enjoyed the chance to do some traveling of our own.

We began dairy farming in 1970 and have retired from the dairy this past August 2007. In 2005, our family celebrated the 75th year the Stitsen families have lived on this present farm. For the last

seven years Tony and I have run a small Bed and Breakfast called "The Empty Nest". Since then we have met many wonderful people.

Sadly, our home parish of St. Anthony's Busby closed its doors with a final Mass on Jan. 12, 2000. We again began attending St. Charles Parish Mearns, my former hometown parish. I became a part of the organizing committee for the St. Charles school reunion in the summer of 2004 and the following year helped to organize the renovations of the interior of the church for the highlight of the year, the celebration of St. Charles'

Parish 75th Anniversary. What a blessing and joy being able to celebrate these two occasions; first with former students of St. Charles School and then the members of St. Charles Parish. The circle of love and faith continues to be built. Our parents, Robert and Laura Kieser, our son Jared and his wife Heather and sons Kaleb and Issac, and Tony and I were honored to present the offertory gifts in procession at the anniversary Mass, symbolizing four generations of faith within our families having attended St. Charles Parish. What an added blessing, knowing that four generations of our immediate Stitsen family were part of this parish, three of which successively were married here along with five generations of our Byer family (Tony's mothers family) who also were part of the same parish as well.

Tony is presently a member of The Knights of Columbus and I belong to the C.W.L. We are proud to continue in the service others began and modeled at St. Charles Parish. Tony and I continue to teach R.C.I.A. (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults).

Over the past 14 years I have been employed by Pembina Hills at the Busby Elementary School as a Rehabilitation Assistant working with Speech /Language and Occupational Therapy Programming. I help direct the school choir and a student guitar group. Together, Tony and I enjoy landscape gardening, seasonal decorating, going for walks or hikes, traveling, reading, listening to music, playing cards, going for sleigh rides, scouting for antiques, sitting by the fire with a glass of wine, visiting with family, friends and neighbors, but a favorite pastime now is time lovingly spent with our grandchildren.

Remembering and cherishing the past, and recalling memories of others lived experiences have

often challenged me to place a great deal of importance on history. Many of those we know have lived their lives with a true passion and have taught us much... where we have come from, and how our lives are woven into the fabric of who we are and how we are connected to each other. I feel privileged to have been able to work on two history books, Busby and Mearns. As for my husband Tony and me, we have followed the same footsteps of Tony's parents, and other couples in the area. "Busby Boy Marries Mearns Girl". Each and every day of our lives we are still making history, a history the next generation will then be keepers of.

Lorianne our oldest daughter married Tim Hoven. They have six children, Aidan, Liam, Therese, Joseph, Francis, and Dominic. They farm near Eckville, AB, and market organic beef.

Corinne married Craig Keller. They live in Leduc, and have three children, Nathan, Laura, and Andrew. Craig works as a paramedic for the City of Edmonton and is also part of the Tactical Team. He has begun a new business CTOMS (Canadian Tactical and Operations Medical Solutions) Inc.

Jody married Jackie Lutz and they farm next door to us. Jody works for the Legal Alfalfa Plant and Jackie works as a Veterinarian Technician in Onoway. Their first child, Aimee, was born November 23, 2007.

Joylynn is married to Paul Tustin and they have a son Brennan. Paul works for Acklands Grainger.

Aaron is single and has recently moved to Edmonton. Prior to his move he was working on the dairy farm.

Jared married Heather Brand and they live on an acreage south of the home farm. Jared is a certified welder at Inland Aggregates. They have two sons, Kaleb and Issac.

Lovisa married Ralph Moreland of Scotland. They are presently living there and have one son Rowen. Ralph is an architect and they are looking at returning to Canada in 2008.

Stitsen, Charles and Mary

By Tony & Claire Stitsen

Charles Stitsen was born in Mannheim, Germany in 1907 and came with his family to Canada that same year. They settled in North Edmonton near Canada Packers and ran a small dairy, bottling and selling milk. In 1917 the family bought a farm south of Bruderheim, near the North gate of Elk Island Park. They then sold milk and cream to the Swift's plant.

In the summer of 1929 the desire of owning his own land drew Charlie to the Busby area where he



Charles and Mary Stitsen family photo taken in 1978.
Back row L to R: Tony, Raymond, John; Front row L to R: Mary Elizabeth, Rosemary, Charlie

purchased a quarter section of land from Edwin J. Smith (NE 10-57-27-W4). Only 50 acres were broken and it cost him \$3000.00. He began clearing the land with an axe and his horses. Each day he would do his chores and bring an axe out to clear more trees.

In 1930 Charlie helped with the construction of the Busby Catholic Church. He often drove the priests from Mearns to Busby for Sunday masses and was called upon to sign and deliver death certificates for the parish.

Charlie owned his own threshing machine and did custom threshing in the area for many of the local farmers. For entertainment, he went to community dances and played accordion at Independence and Busby, often walking the distance there and back.

Charlie was introduced to Mary Byer, of the Mearns parish, by Father Merchant. They were later married in 1943. Their first son, John, was born in 1945; Raymond in 1946; Anthony in 1948; Rosemary in 1950 and Elizabeth in 1956. Mary spoke of working for many of the families in the Mearns area, some of whom were the Polakovits family and the Friedrich family. Their close friends and neighbors were the Halle family. They shared many happy memories visiting with the Millers and the Wulff families. Mary's parents and grandparents were members of the St. Charles parish. They are buried in the Mearns cemetery.

Charlie, Mary and their family members were members of St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Busby and often attended services in Mearns for Christmas or special feast days when mass was not held in Busby. Their son Tony and his wife Claire purchased the family farm and Charlie and Mary

moved to the old William Stitsen farm, one mile west of the home farm, until they retired to Westlock in 1980. They have both since passed away.

Tailleur, Gerard (J.R.) & Lori (Wulff)

By Lori Tailleur



Lori (Wulff) and Gerard J.R. Tailleur. Photo taken May 2004

I am Lori Wulff, daughter of Louise and Ernie Wulff. I was born December 1st, 1969 in St Albert's old General Hospital. I was baptized and made my first Communion in St. Charles Church in Mearns.

I played ball on the Mearns baseball diamonds and I was a 4-H member for a number of years. From 1982 to 1984 I participated in 4-H highway cleanup. I was also a camp counsellor in various 4-H camps. From 1990 to 1994 I was on the board of directors for the Alberta Camping Association.

I attended school at various locations; grades one to nine at Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre, and Grades 10 to 12 at Sturgeon Composite High where I graduated in 1987.

From 1989 to 1990 I moved into Edmonton with my grandparents, Albert and Blanche Wulff, and went to NAIT where I received diplomas for Business Management and Forestry Wildlife Conservation.

I worked at various places while going to school and attending NAIT:

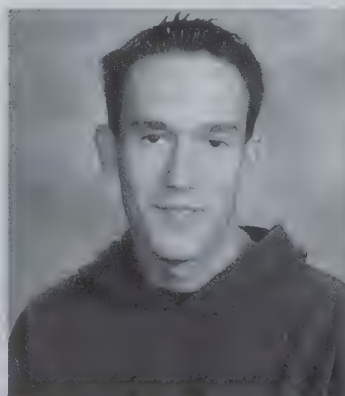
- 1979 to 1988 helped prepare & serve food for banquets at the Morinville Recreation Centre
- 1988 to 1989 worked for Creative Catering in Edmonton



Gerard and Lori (Wulff) married August 17, 1996

- 1989 worked at the Edmonton Golf and Country Club as short order cook
- 1989 to 1991 was a counsellor at Camp Wakamas and camp director for Knights of Columbus Camp near Clyde, Alberta.
- 1991 to 2006 I have been working for Standard General as surveyor helper, laborer, and grade checker.

On August 17, 1996 I married Gerard Tailleur (J.R.) of Morinville at St. Jean Baptist Church. J.R.(Gerard) was born December 31, 1963. J.R. has a son, Andy Tailleur, born on April 29, 1986. Andy is now grown and has moved on to work for a roofing company.



Andrew Tailleur — 17 year old son of Gerard Tailleur

J.R. is a professional truck driver. He started with Lafarge Concrete then went to Newalta Environmental Services, then to Sturgeon Valley Fertilizer and on to Alta Rock Concrete and Cem Teck Services. He drove for Jerry's Trucking, hauling crude oil, then back to driving cement truck for Z-Rock Reddy Mix Concrete and at present is driving cement truck for Rolling Mix Concrete Ltd. of Edmonton.

After I finished NAIT I moved back to Morinville and lived in DeVille Estates. That is

where I met J.R. Shortly after we married we bought a house in Morinville where we presently live. I only work seasonal for Standard General Construction so it lets me spend a lot of time visiting Grandma Blanche and playing cards with her in the Heritage Lodge in Morinville.

Tellier, Joe & Yvonne

By Pauline Kremer (Tellier)

Joseph was born March 20, 1904 on his father's homestead two miles north and four miles west of Morinville. He attended Tellier School (named after his grandfather) a couple of miles from his home. He left school after grade seven (he claims he knew more than the teacher.) This was not to put down the teacher, but rather a way of getting out of school to help the family. Joe was strapped by his teacher almost daily because he didn't learn his catechism. He says he didn't mind because on cold winter days his hands were warm all the way home.

He started to help with the harvest when he was 14 years old, following the threshing crews. In the years that followed, Joe would spend the winter in lumber and tie camps. He was a canter (turning logs on a carriage), one of the hardest jobs at a sawmill. Getting to the lumber camp was time consuming because the horses could only travel 20 to 30 miles per day. Numerous stops had to be made along the way, sometimes obliging Joe to sleep outside. One memorable night, somewhere between Evansburg and Entwistle when the temperature dipped to minus 40 degrees Fahrenheit, they dug a hole in the snow and slept under the stars. They were poorly dressed and did not own proper footwear to protect them from the cold temperatures.

While at the sawmill in Rich Valley he made all of the lumber he would need to build his two room, one and one-half storey house on his 320 acre C.P.R. land near Mearns. He had purchased this land from his father.

On November 23, 1927 Joe married Yvonne Meunier, a girl from the town of Morinville. Yvonne was born on June 2, 1908 in Morinville. A horse-drawn buggy was used to move Yvonne's few precious possessions to the farm. Their four daughters, Pauline, Jeannine, Lorette and Lorraine were born during the years on the farm.

Joe and Yvonne became very adept at making do with what they had. Joe farmed the land and raised cattle and pigs while Yvonne looked after the garden and took care of the chickens and turkeys. Joe supplemented the farm income by trucking. He hauled grain for many of the farmers around Morinville. He spent the winter of 1942 working on the Alaska Highway while Yvonne took care of the chores on the farm. She also had to take care of the four children (the twins were babies) during one of the worst winters on record.

In 1946, 1947 and 1948 Joe did some combining in the southern part of the United States. In early spring, after putting in his crop, Joe would put his combine on the back of his truck and head for Texas where farmers, who were short of harvesting machinery, would hire Joe's outfit. Moving north with the harvest, Joe would make it back just in time to harvest his own crop.

Joe was elected to the Belle Valley school board and served for four or five years. He was instrumental in seeing that Religion and French were taught in the school. The little country school did not go much beyond grade eight and so in 1948 Joe and Yvonne moved their little house to Morinville to give their daughters an opportunity to get a better education.

Joe continued farming and trucking until 1976 when he sold the farm. He and Yvonne moved to Edmonton and lived at St. Joachim's Manor until 1988. Joe passed away on April 19, 1991 at 87 and Yvonne continued to live at Chateau Mission Court in St. Albert until her death December 15, 2004 at the age of 96.

Land description

NW 15-56-26-W4th

SW 15-56-26-W4th



Ploughing with horses on the Joe Tellier Farm – 1936

Joseph and Yvonne's four daughters:

- Pauline (Tellier) Kremer was born December 31, 1929 in Edmonton and lives in Athabasca. Pauline has five children: Tom, Colleen Sieswerda, David, Janet Kerr and Glen.
- Jeannine (Tellier) Mercier was born June 30, 1932 at Mearns and lived in Edmonton. Jeannine died April 27, 2001. Jeannine had five children: Lorraine Perras, Marcel, Dan, Ron and Rich.
- Twins Lorette and Lorraine were born September 27, 1939 in Edmonton. Lorette (Tellier) Patry lives in Ottawa and has two sons, Mark and Lee. Lorraine (Tellier) Cowan lives in Edmonton and has one daughter, Michele.

No running water... no power... no natural gas...

When Mom and Dad first started out they hauled water from Mrs. Halle and some from the spring at Pete Sheehan's. When I was born they decided that a well had to be dug. A lot of water was needed for laundry, cooking, cleaning, gardening, drinking and the livestock. In the mid-thirties Dad installed a pump jack on the well as well as a large galvanized water tank. There was still lots of water hauling for household use. The well was also our refrigeration for milk, cream, butter and meat. They used a large covered container that was lowered with a rope. To my knowledge, no food was ever spilt.



The Tellier Family – 1983

Joseph and Yvonne (Meunier) Tellier with their daughters, Lorette Patry, Pauline Kremer, Jeanine Mercier, and Lorraine Cowan

They raised cattle, pigs, horses and poultry (chickens, turkey, and geese). Dad had two quarters of land on which he grew oats, wheat, barley, and in later years, canola. They did try raising sheep but they got a disease and had to be disposed of.

Our closest hamlet was Mearns, about two and a half miles north. At that time it had a small grocery store, post office, and a small bulk oil dealership – all in one operation. There were two grain elevators and two homes for the agents. There was the Catholic Church (St. Charles) and an old rectory that eventually burned. A lovely new one was soon built. The priests in residence were Father Fay, Father Stacey and Father Merchant. If I remember correctly, they were all Maritimers.

The Northern Alberta Railway went through Mearns and there was a small depot. On cold, clear nights you could hear the train whistle. There was an outdoor skating rink and probably two baseball diamonds.



Funeral for Isabelle (Daly) Tellier, 93 years old. Last funeral in Morinville to use horses and funeral coach. Joe Tellier was driver for his grandma

When the Church rectory burned someone was able to save the records of births, marriages, and deaths. They stored them at Alexander Reserve with Father Pratt. My dad had great difficulty some years later to find my sister Jeanine's baptism certificate. He looked at Legal, St. Albert, Edmonton, Riviere Qui Barre, and Westlock never dreaming the records were at the Reserve. Jeanine was the only one born at home and was baptized at Mearns (St. Charles).

Our neighbour to the north was Edgar Ellett, to the west was Walter Ellett, to the east was Hector Gibeau, and to the south was Pete Sheehan.

Our address on the farm was R.R. 2 and some 77 years later that property has the same address. Our mailman was Armand Chalifoux who delivered mail on Wednesday and Saturday. His wife, Stella, owned a grocery store and the Alberta Hotel, and when Dad was away working on the Alaska

Highway, Mom would call Stella and Armand would bring some groceries.

At that time people could not get very much fresh fruit and vegetables as everything froze when you travelled by sleigh – no lettuce, no tomatoes, celery, bananas, etc. Wilfred Labonte had a meat shop and in summer he would drive to the country and we could buy meat from his covered truck. All the meat was on blocks of ice. We thought wieners and bologna were a real treat. Mr. Augustin Billo would come with his truck to pick up cream and eggs and bring it to the creamery in Edmonton.

In the early 40's Dad bought a grain auger that could be put on his truck. The first Sunday they had it they went to church. Mother was humiliated to go to church with that thing on the truck. Of course Dad demonstrated this thing to all interested farmers. It did save a lot of time shovelling grain and he did earn money, hauling grain for the local farmers. He also bought and sold livestock. That truck was a cash cow.

In the early 40's Dad went to Dawson Creek to work on the Alaska Highway. It was impossibly cold then and I believe we set a record for freezing temperatures and inches of snow. Mom was at home with us girls, and she did the chores. It was no picnic for anyone. There was no heater in the truck – some of the fellows from Texas and some of the southern states must have thought they were at the end of the world. Some had never even seen snow before. Dad was hauling water for Figol Transport. The cook shack and sleeping quarters were made with canvas.

Before Dad had a truck we had an old bazoo of a car that had to be cranked. When Jeanine and I were small we played in the car and shifted gears. Later when Dad needed the car he cranked it and it reversed at full speed. It could have been a disaster! Boy, was the air blue! Dad didn't get angry very often, but when he did, it counted.



Joe Tellier's new car – circa 1930's

Jeanine and I went to Belle Valley School one and a half miles west. We went by cutter in winter and by sulky, horseback or walking in summer.

Belle Valley had two rooms and we were fortunate in having grades one to twelve. The two teachers lived on school grounds in a teacherage. The day of the small country school was changing; schools became centralized and school buses started making their trips. Belle Valley was eventually closed and moved to Mearns, became St. Charles School then became a community hall. It was right next to the Sisters' residence.

Dad supplemented our wood supply by buying logs from the Alexander Reserve, which was illegal as the sale had to go through Mr. Conway who was Reserve Administrator. The Native selling the logs was Joe Burnstick. He scared our mother more than once, as he would try to get some vanilla or lemon extract, or aftershave, which at that time had an alcohol base. When Dad was away, Mom would barricade the door with knives stuck in the doorframe. He would just eventually go away.

Laundry was a real hassle. The water was hauled in from the well and heated on the stove. Our first washing machine had a wooden tub and we turned the agitator by pushing and pulling a lever. It also had a wringer attached to it. We then graduated to a gas engine powered machine that was a lot easier, but care had to be taken that the exhaust fumes went outside through a pipe as someone could easily be asphyxiated. I recall Mother using lye in the laundry – it could have been a bleach type of thing. I can still smell it!

Another use for lye was in the processing of laundry bar soap. A huge cast iron pot was used over a fire out in the yard. This was where lye and fat and whatever else was used was cooked on this fire. It was strained, poured into pans, cooled and cut into bars. This bar soap was used for laundry and dishwashing. Very potent stuff. Reminds me of the song "Grandma's Lye Soap".

Late fall was usually time to slaughter beef and/or pork. I presume the victim was shot. There was a set of tripods with block and tackle to raise the carcass so it could be skinned, gutted, and quartered. They would then use their skills in meat cutting to get roasts, steaks, stews, hamburger, etc. Mother would process a lot of the meat in quart sealers that took hours to cook over a hot stove. It was a good time saver for fast meals. Beef and pork fat was rendered into lard for cooking and for making pastry. This was in the days of no power – no freezers!

Processing poultry was also a big job as poultry were killed, scalded and then plucked and eviscerated. If it was too cold, this job had to be done in the kitchen. Imagine all those feathers in your kitchen. The job required plenty of hot water and washtub-sized containers. Chicken was also

processed in quart jars, which was a long process on the wood and coal stove. They would also sell some poultry at Edmonton City Market where they could rent a stall with table space.

Mother canned many vegetables, fruits, jams, and pickles. There were many shelves full of this. They also had bins for potatoes, cabbages, carrots, beets, and turnips. There were seldom problems in storing in a dirt cellar; better than a cement one.

Harvest time was super busy. I recall Dad using a six-horse drawn binder that cut the grain and bundled it. Next step was to put all those bundles into stooks to let them dry and hope the rain would stay away. Not every farmer had a threshing machine so the machine was hauled from farm to farm. It was powered by a big noisy tractor.

The day started early and ended late. There were extra men, extra horses, and you were lucky if the rain stayed away. Mom would cook enormous meals and cook again for huge morning and afternoon coffee breaks. Sometimes the extra men went home in the evening and some might stay and sleep in the hayloft. The men were also at work early as they had to water, feed and harness their horses.

I think the threshing machine and huge tractor had belonged to Grandfather Tellier and it was used by Uncle Robert, Uncle Maurice and Dad. I presume that if the weather permitted, they would have harvested at the neighbours. And then we became mechanized with each our own tractor and combine. It is romantic to think of harvesting in the old days, but there is something to be said for the new methods of farming. But always we are at the mercy of the weather. This entailed a lot of work for Mother – all those meals, the regular farm chores and a family of girls to raise.

Mother was an excellent housekeeper and a wonderful seamstress. She made all our clothes. Many winter nights she burned the midnight oil. That Singer sewing machine started out hemming diapers, went on to repair binder canvasses and graduated to wedding dresses. To this day we are all picky about the clothes we buy.

Farm life in the 30's was hard, but we were never cold, we were decently clothed, and we had an abundance of food. We never felt as though we were deprived. Everyone was in the same boots. These were the "dirty 30s" and my three sisters and I were a product of this period.

I try not to dwell on the hard times, as there were also many fun times. There was an annual chicken supper at Mearns, with baseball and softball tournaments, horseshoes, and special competitions for the children such as races, sack races, 3-legged races and egg in a spoon races. One year at the

chicken supper, our mother was helping in the kitchen and Dad brought Jeanine and I in to supper. After being seated, a lady with a baby sat in front of us and promptly bared her breasts and fed her baby. My father probably chuckled as we sat there and gawked at this happening – at that time people did not bare their breasts in public even if they were feeding their baby.

I recall being in church at Mearns and a neighbor came in with his brood. He was carrying the baby in one arm and swinging a beer bottle with a nipple on it in the other hand. Baby had urinated and he had streaks of it all the way down his clothes.

I recall there being Christmas concerts in the church basement. There were children performing from about four district schools. There were songs, dances, recitations, plays, etc. Usually each family would bring a loaf of sandwiches, or cake, cookies, pickles, etc. for lunch and socializing when it was all over. We occasionally had free films from the National Film Board. There would also be card games and bingos. These were mostly winter events. We had Christmas concerts at Belle Valley with parents supplying lunches. There would also be a year-end party and we would get together with other schools, Camilla and Egg Lake, that were quite close by.

I think I could write much more memorabilia, but my house might fall around my ears. It has been a slice to reminisce.

Therres, Lenard & Marlene

By Lenard & Marlene

We moved to the Mearns area (NE 20-56-26 W4) in July of 1986. Our children, Lee and Kim (14 and 12 years old at the time) were quite annoyed with us for moving to the country from Morinville. As the years went by they grew to love their new home and country life and to this day they still consider it "home", the place where they grew up. It



Lenard & Marlene Therres – 1998

is with many fond memories we write this article for the Mearns history book.

We lived on our acreage for 14 years (1986-2000) and as we reminisce we think of our dear friends John, Joan and Bobby Polakovits and the good cups of coffee and conversations we shared. There were many good neighbors around our area



Lee and Kody Therres – April 1993



Kim and Kody Therres – Dec. 1995

and we will always remember them. That is what country life is all about and what we treasure most. One of the things that sticks out most in our minds is when our bales were on fire and our neighbors came running over to lend a hand and rescued the fence that was slowly burning bit by bit along with the remainder of the bales.

Our grandson, Kody (Kim's little boy), was born there on April 17, 1992 and he drove his "little big foot" around the whole yard and pretty much wore out his bike riding up and down the driveway. Kim is married to Nathan McLean and has a little girl, Isley, born October 9, 2001 and another child on the way. Kim works for a law firm as a conveyancer. Lee is married to Lori Spilak and has one son, Ethan, born March 24, 2005. Lee is a Mechanical Engineer.

We all live in the Morinville area but many a time we take a drive and tour the area around Mearns and remember the "good old days".

Tomten, James & Selma

By Elaine Soetaert (Tomten)

James Arthur Tomten was born on April 5, 1930 at Sion, Alberta, son of Petra and Karl Tomten. He had two siblings, Ebba and Paul. He grew up as many young men of his time did: working hard, playing hard and hating porridge.



James and Selma Tomten. Photo taken in 1982

Selma Agnes Eidick was born October 10, 1932 at the family farm in New Sarepta, Alberta. She was the 11th child of 14. She met James as a young girl in the spring of 1945 when the Eidick family moved to the Alcomdale area. James and Selma were married September 1, 1951. They had their first daughter, Elaine, one year later on September 12, 1952.



James & Selma Tomten, September 1, 1951

The young couple lived at the Tomten homestead near Sion until James chose to seek his fortune away from the farm. They lived in Edmonton and James worked for CPR. Brenda was born on June 12, 1956 and shortly after, the small family moved to Winnipeg for one year while James tried his hand at being a vacuum cleaner salesman. James' big smile and respect for people made him a big hit selling vacuum cleaners. But within a few months he realized that being on the road and away from his wife and children was not for him, so the family returned to Alberta where James purchased the home place four miles west and a mile and half south of Alcomdale.

On May 24, 1958 James and Selma were blessed with their son, Kevin. He was a scrawny little kid and often worried his parents. But he soon decided to grow and became a big force in the family!

The early years on the farm at Alcomdale were tough and everyone had to work hard. James ran a trucking business as well as farming. Selma chored, gardened and raised kids and life was becoming a little easier. 1963 brought running water and Beverly (February 28) to the Tomten household.

During the years the family was growing, James was a leader in the Alcomdale community. He served on the community league, the gas co-op and was involved in the building of the curling rink. He loved to curl and bonspiel season saw a lot of activity in the Tomten household. Selma, Elaine,

and Kevin were all pressed into the service of the curling team at times!

James and Selma spent a lot of time with their neighbours, playing cards and fishing. When James' grandchildren think of their grandpa, they remember the big gruff sounding man with the boat and more fish than they could count. Somehow they always caught a fish on Grandpa's rod just when Grandpa had them hold it so he could tie his shoe.

James owned and operated a school bus for over 25 years. He was instrumental at organizing the school bus contractors in Sturgeon and due to his efforts they have one of the best agreements with their employer of all the contractors in Alberta. He served as president of the Alberta School Bus Contractors Association for a number of years.

In 1975, Selma purchased her bus and became a school bus contractor too. For Christmas that year, she bought herself a fur-trimmed leather coat. Friends and family were delighted that she chose to spend some of her hard-earned money on herself! She continued to drive the school bus until 1988 when she hired a driver and finally sold the bus to Kevin in 1992. Kevin still continues this legacy to today – owning and managing a small fleet of buses in Sturgeon School Division.

Travelling with neighbours and friends was something the Tomten family really enjoyed. One of the first communal trips was in 1979 touring all across Canada – complete with a circuit around P.E.I. A few summers later, James and Selma organized a caravan of neighbours and their families who all headed for B.C. for two weeks. It was just the beginning, and, over the years, family and friends accompanied them on motor home trips across the U.S.A.

Elaine married Martin Soetaert, August 26, 1972 and they have two daughters, Breanne, born November 16, 1978 and Katrina, February 14, 1981.



Martin and Elaine (Tomten) Soetaert family photo taken January 2007. L to R: Katrina, Elaine, Martin, Breanne and Lindsay Mouser

Breanne married Lindsay Mouser, October 2, 2004 and is working as a nurse at the Stollery Children's Hospital. Katrina works at the General Veterinary Hospital in Edmonton. Martin has worked for the Alberta Government in the Environment Ministry for over 30 years as well as farming his family farm near Villeneuve. Elaine is an educator and taught at Sturgeon Composite High School, NAIT, and is currently working for Alberta Education.

Brenda married Brian Stewart Aug 13, 1977 and they have two children – Cody, born October 1, 1978 and Angela, June 29, 1980. Cody married Linsay Skipper August 27, 2005 and they have one child, Emily Katelyn, born January 6, 2007. Angie married Kelsey Hosack on August 10, 2002 and they have two daughters, Karyssa Jordyn, born January 27, 2004 and Janessa Delaine, born July 2, 2006. Brenda and Brian operate Abacus Enterprises and, though lots of hard work, enjoy operating a successful business.

On August 17, 1991, Kevin married Yolande Blanchette and a new family was born. Kevin and



Brenda and Brian Stewart with children Angie and Cody in photo taken in summer of 1989

Yolande raised two wonderful children, Adrienne, born June 27, 1983 and Trevor, September 27, 1985. Adrienne graduated from the Medical Laboratory Assistant program at NAIT and is now working for the Sturgeon Hospital in St. Albert. Trevor is working towards his welding certificate.

Kevin was in a single vehicle rollover in 1987 that left him paralyzed from the chest down. Despite this enormous challenge, he chose to live a life of purpose and volunteered for the Injury Awareness Centre at the U of A Hospital. There, he became a speaker for the program called HEROES. He traveled all across Alberta to high schools advocating injury prevention; he told his story of how he was injured and what it's like to live life in a wheelchair. This program touched many young lives and he hopes his message will get through to prevent others from having to go through what he has. Kevin is very proud of the difference he made in the lives of the young people he met. While working with HEROES, Kevin met Yolande – love blossomed and soon Kevin was taking on another role as MR. MOM. Kevin did this job very well while Yolande worked outside the home. Kevin has been a school bus contractor for over 20 years and still manages a small fleet of buses for Sturgeon School Division from his residence in St. Albert.



Kevin and Yolande Tomten's family photo with children Adrienne, Trevor and dog Max

Beverly married Marvin Soetaert, November 13, 1982. They have three children: Nicole, born May 17, 1985, Amanda, February 26, 1988 and Shawn, November 29, 1990. Nicole and Amanda both attend the University of Alberta. Nicole is completing her last year of nursing and Amanda is in her first year of Engineering. Shawn is in grade

ten at Sturgeon Composite High School. Some of Bev's fondest memories of her time in Alcomdale are the "Keep Fit" club, the Alcomdale 4-H Beef Club and the social gatherings with neighbours and friends. Bev and Marv farm together and operate a cow/calf business near Villeneuve.



Beverly (Tomten) and Martin Soetaert with children Shawn, Amanda and Nicole

James died June 24, 1992 after a year-long battle with cancer. Selma's love of family and farming became a career as she became a helpmate to Bev and Marv as they continued to operate the farm in Alcomdale as well as their farm near Villeneuve. She helped with the kids, cooking, cleaning, mending clothes and even helping out with the homework at times. Selma also kept watch over Bev and Marv's cows that were pasturing at her place. She was very active in her church and kept her life full with service to others.

Selma died a short five years after James on October 7, 1997 after a six-month battle with cancer. The home farm is still owned and farmed by James and Selma's youngest daughter and her husband – Beverly and Marvin Soetaert. Angie and Kelsey Hosack and family reside on a portion of James and Selma's farmland.



James and Selma Tomten with children and grandchildren in photo taken August 1991

Trautman, Herbert & Kathleen

By Kathleen Trautman

Herb was born in Westlock, Alberta and I was born in Bassano, Alberta. We were married in 1959 and farmed with Herb's parents in the Golden Spike Garden Valley area which is located south of Spruce Grove, Alberta.



The Trautman Family – Nov. 2002. Cindy, Laurie, Kathy, & Herb Trautman

In 1966 we moved to the Mearns/Alcomdale area where we purchased three quarters of land from the Larsens. It was known as the "Cunningham Place". In a couple of years we purchased two quarters from his Dad and his Dad sold a quarter to Bill and Carol Jones.

We have two daughters, Cindy and Laurie, who went to school in Alcomdale and Camilla and later to Sturgeon Composite High School.

Cindy married and has two sons, Bradley and Ryan. Bradley has his four years of schooling for an electrician and Ryan will be going into his third year of schooling for an electrician.

Laurie married Bob Baker and they have a daughter, Brandi, who is in grade two.

Both of the families are close by in Edmonton.

At this time we are still

doing mixed farming. Farming is getting to be tough for small farmers to make a go of it as the price of fuel and fertilizer is so high and we don't get much for what we produce.

All in all farming is a good way of living. Being on the farm was a good way of life for our girls and our grandchildren.



Ryan (18), Brad (19) and Cindy Trautman – Nov. 2002



Bob, Laurie (Trautman) & Brandi Baker

Van Brabant. Maurice & Evelyn

By Evelyn Van Brabant

Maurice and Evelyn Van Brabant purchased the Ovila and Alma Sabourin farm on March 23, 1965. The land's legal description was NE¼ 27-56-26-W4th and SW¼ 34-56-26-W4th.



Maurice & Evelyn Van Brabant Family. Center back: Trevor and Bryan. Back row: Vivianne, Dwight, Jason, Maury, Janice, Colleen, June. Front: Karen, Wayne, Evelyn & Maurice, Cheryl

The SW¼ of section 34 has the St. Charles Cemetery located on it.

Although Maurice and Evelyn never lived on the farm, they got to know many fine neighbours in the area.

Maurice and Evelyn have a family of six boys and six girls who, along with spouses, all live in the Morinville and St. Albert areas, with the exception of one daughter who lives near Okotoks, outside of Calgary.

Van Hecke, Roger & Judy (Lutz)

By Judy & Roger Van Hecke

Judy is the third child born to Joseph and Evelyn Lutz. Being raised in a family of nine children had (and still has) lots of advantages – you were certainly never bored!

Judy was born on November 9, 1966 at the Edmonton Hospital. She received the sacraments of Baptism, First Communion and Confirmation in Mearns. She went to Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre for grades one to nine, then off to Namao for the last three years of school. She graduated in 1984.

It was at this time that she met Roger at her cousin's wedding, but it was not for another year before they started dating. From 1984 to 1986 she worked full time on the farm and experienced her parents as her first time bosses! She entered the Early Childhood Development Program at Grant MacEwan Community College in the fall of 1986. She drove to Millwoods everyday for two years (the cost of fuel was cheaper than now) while



Roger and Judy (Lutz) VanHecke family photo taken in June 2005 at daughter Kasara's grade nine Camilla School Prom. Back row L to R: Judy holding Nakysta, Kasara, Roger. Front row L to R: Tanysha, Dalin

contributing to the farm work. She graduated with her diploma in the spring of 1988.

Roger was born in Edmonton on April 14, 1962. He was the ninth child of twelve born to Albert and Jeanne Van Hecke and was raised on a farm south of Fort Saskatchewan. He went to school in the Fort as well as Sherwood Park. He graduated from Fort High in 1981 and took a job at Whissel Construction. Roger started the Heavy Duty Mechanic Program at NAIT in 1985 and got his ticket in the spring of 1988.

Roger and Judy started seeing one another in May of 1985. After three years of Roger supporting the fuel companies driving back and forth from Fort Saskatchewan/Sherwood Park area to where Judy resided south of Alcomdale, they got married on June 4, 1988.

The first two years they were married they rented a farm a mile east of where Roger grew up. They were both employed full-time with off-farm jobs. They slowly worked on building up their cow-calf herd along with paying off their first tractor and other pieces of equipment.

In May of 1990 they bought their own place and moved to where they reside today, which is one mile

east and one mile south of Busby. There must have been something in that Busby water because they no sooner got settled in their new home that they found they were expecting their first child. Kasara Lyn Marie was born on February 13, 1991. She is currently 15 years old and is entering grade 11 at Sturgeon Composite High School. She loves basketball, music, reading, ice cream and 4-H.

Roger and Judy continued to work full-time to supplement the farm. On November 28, 1995 their second child, Tanysha Jackie-Lyn was born. She is now 10 years old. She is entering grade six at Camilla School in RQB. She loves small animals, running, reading, soccer and freezies. She is also a member of the Double Diamond 4-H Multi Club, like her older sister.

They were on such a fantastic role with their two beautiful children they thought that they would have another; their son, Dalin Joseph, was born on January 14, 1999. He is currently seven years old and entering third grade in the fall of 2006. He loves food and cooking, bike riding, weather, gardening (plant cycles) and candy.

Being blessed with three wonderful children only encouraged them to try for another. Their fourth child was born on December 18, 2003. Nakysta Joe-Dea-Lyn was their pre-Christmas present that year. She loves being outside, exploring the world around her, climbing, being independent and getting into her older siblings precious things.

At present Roger and Rudy still have the cow-calf operation and do some grain farming as well. Roger is a self-employed mechanic. He went on his own in 1994. They built a shop in 1999, which helped keep him working closer to home and out of the cold and snow.

Judy is a teacher at the Busby Preschool and has been since 2002. Their family is involved in 4-H (Roger and Judy are both leaders). The family went on their first family holiday in the summer of 2005



"Safety First" ... all in lifejackets. VanHecke's first summer holiday to B.C. (July 2005). Back: Judy & Kasara. Front: Tanysha, Dalin, Nakysta, & Roger

to B.C. It was fantastic! They all really enjoyed the change. Who knows... they may be able to fit a few more of those in their future.

Van Hove, Charles & Rosey

By Ida Vezina (Van Hove)



Charles and Rosey Van Hove – 1933

My father, Charles, immigrated to Canada from Belgium in 1921 with friends. He was the second child of a family of six born to Constant and Irma Van Hove. Charles was born on August 30th, 1901 in Zuienkerke, Belgium. He was the only one of his family to come to Canada.

Charles worked in the St. Albert and Morinville areas for about 12 years. One fall he was part of a harvesting crew at the DeRudder farm west of Morinville when he met a hired girl there named Rosey Granger. My mother, Rosey, was the fourth of fourteen children born to Adelphis and Lucy Granger of Riviere Qui Barre.

Dad and Mom were married on February 14th, 1933 in the St. Emerence Church in Riviere Qui Barre.

They settled in the Mearns area, buying two quarters of land from a man by the last name of Daro. Their land was located one mile north and one mile east of Mearns. They did mixed farming, which

was common in those days: grain, cattle, pigs and poultry. Dad and Mom were also great gardeners, producing the best potatoes in the area. Mom did a lot of vegetable and wild berry preserves. Dad butchered animals for our meat, which he salted and cured in big crocks. He also smoked bacon, sausages and hams. They milked six to 12 cows and the money from the sale of the cream put extra food, like flour, tea, coffee, and sugar, on the table.

Together they raised five children. I was born on December 21st, 1933 at the McLellan's farm, two miles northeast of Riviere Qui Barre. Grandma Granger assisted as midwife. It was a cold winter day and my Dad delivered a rocking chair on horseback for Mom to rock me. George was born on May 28th, 1936 at our farm, also assisted by Grandma.

In 1937 Grandma Granger passed away so Mom took in one of her little brothers, Alphonse Granger, who was nine years old at the time. He stayed with us until he was able to go on his own at about 19 years old. In his teens he trapped little animals and sold the furs. I remember those stinky pelts drying behind the cook stove.

Marie was born on May 27th, 1938 in the Misericordia Hospital in Edmonton. In 1942 my parents sold that farm and bought three quarters of land from Pete and Hans Larsen, located two miles north of Mearns. We moved there and had to clear a lot of bush. There was a good-sized slough so the cattle had water. All the fieldwork was done with horses those days. We had around eight horses.

The children attended New England School in Alcomdale. They traveled with horse and cart or cutter.

Our parish was St. Charles. Dad and Mom were very faithful to their religion. The children went for Catechism at St. Charles for two weeks of their summer holidays. The Sisters taught them and school was from 9 am to 3 pm. We all enjoyed Christmas Eve, going to Mass by sleigh and team of horses. Most times the night was moonlit with crispy snow. On Holy Thursday we went to the city after Mass to buy new Easter bonnets so we would be beautiful for Easter Sunday.

Joseph was born on September 16th, 1945 in Edmonton.

Around this time Dad bought Alphonse a small Farmall tractor. He did some light farm work for neighbors in the area. Many times he used it as a vehicle on the road.

The family's first car was a new 1947 Kaiser. I remember one time Dad was putting the car in the garage and said "Whoa" but it didn't stop and pushed the wall onto a fence behind the garage.

In 1948 the St. Charles School opened at

Mearns and George and Marie went there. Two years later I attended there for grades 10 and 11, then stayed home to help my parents.

I belonged to the CYO (Catholic Youth Organization). We would put on stage plays for the parish.

Moses was born on March 9th, 1956 at Immaculata Hospital in Westlock.

Mom and Dad were very talented. On long winter evenings Mom would knit socks and mittens for the family. Dad mended socks and repaired shoes. Mom also sewed most of our clothing. I remember her making bridal bouquets with crepe paper to sell. Dad carved picture frames from cigar and apple boxes and he also made wooden toys.

Alphonse was good at making wooden toys too. When he was 14 years old he was at home with the measles for a couple of weeks. In that time he built a child size, three-drawer dresser with a mirror from apple boxes. I still have it in my spare bedroom.

On those long dark evenings by kerosene lamps our parents taught us kids card games and dancing to Don Messer's music on the radio.

In 1967 Dad and Mom took a trip to Belgium to visit all his relatives back home. That was his first and last visit home. Charles passed away December 18th, 1968 from heart failure at the age of 67. His grave is in St. Charles Cemetery.

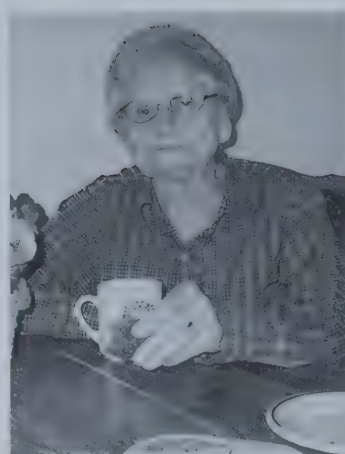


Charles Van Hove Family – L to R: Moses, Marie, George, Ida, Joe, Rosey and Charles

After Dad's passing, Mom took up crocheting and quilting. She crocheted a bedspread and quilted a blanket for each of us kids and made many other articles for herself.

George continued farming, staying with Mom. Moses was only 12 years old and attending St. Charles School, later going to Camilla School at Riviere Qui Barre.

Mom took many tour trips, including Europe, California, Florida, Nashville and all parts of



Rosey (Granger) Van Hove
– June 30, 2004

Canada. In 1974 Mom married Oswald Chevalier and lived in Morinville for five years, then they moved to Merritt, B.C. Oswald passed away there in 1984. A year later Mom moved to Westlock. She has her own little home, grows a garden, cuts lawn and shovels snow. She is still doing some of this at age 93.

Van Hove, George & Lydia Family

By Lydia

George has lived on the family farm since his parents purchased it when he was five years old.

His first job off the farm was working as a flunky in a seismograph bush camp. He had a great variety of jobs after that time. One was working on the new school foundation at Riviere Qui Barre. Also in his construction experience, he helped build basements for the houses at Wabamun before the plant opened there. He also worked for a seismic crew as a jug hustler, reel truck driver and a shooter. George was employed by Egg Lake Coal Mine where he worked in the mine and also delivered coal to the oil rigs. He hauled lumber for Armand Himshoote from Smith to various destinations.

When he started farming full time in 1966, he also ran the snow patrol in winter for the County of Strathcona. In 1969 Tommy Spargo, Emil DeRudder and George purchased a grain dryer. They did custom drying for many of the local farmers, a nice little business that complemented the farming

In 1978 George met and married Lydia Hopley (nee Dunham). Lydia had a son, Lorne, aged 14 and a daughter, Laurine, aged 12. On December 24, 1979 a son Randy was born. Being a month overdue, Randy was very impatient to make his appearance, so was born four miles north of Morinville in the truck on the way to the hospital. His traumatic beginning was quickly healed and Randy became a very healthy active boy.

Lorne married his first wife, Lori Unger, in 1982 and had two girls, Jodi and Jamie. They divorced when Jamie was a few months old. In 1987 Lorne married Connie Cartwright. They have two girls, Shanandoah and Jacquelyn and now reside eight miles south of Westlock.

Laurine married John Melo in 1996 and had a

daughter, Dyanna, that same year. John also has a son Ryan and a daughter Kimberly from a previous marriage. They reside in St Albert.

Randy is now living in Slave Lake and works for Remote Wireline Service, although he is a journeyman heavy-duty mechanic by trade. He is not as hyper as when he was a young lad although he is a highly motivated individual. Randy has inherited his father's strong common sense, love for fishing and hunting, and ability to speak volumes with only a few words. Thank goodness he also inherited his love for FORD, as he is waiting for his father's new 2005 Diesel F350 with baited breath.

The whole Van Hove family has "prankster" in their blood veins. Ida, a few years back, was asked to mend some jeans for a friend. Turns out she sewed one pant leg closed as a joke. George, at his first camp job, got the bright idea to put pepper on the fan. I guess we can imagine what happened in that room when they turned the fan on! One time when George was working in a camp job, Vic LeBlanc, a family friend, was cleaning out the cabin. He even took out the stove to do a good job. Paul Roy climbed on top the bunkhouse with a pail of water and instructed George to get Vic under the stovepipe. You can imagine how black Vic was when the water came rushing through the soot laden chimney all over him. It's a good thing that Paul could outrun Vic.

George was also involved in taking a goat into a dance hall and riding a horse into the Busby Hotel. He always rode the same horse into his house at Christmas time when all his nieces and nephews were there. They shouted with glee to see the horse in the house. What a treat!

Perhaps George's most memorable prank was a couple of years back. Remember the big Y-2K scare? No one knew what was going to happen at midnight that year of 2000. Well, as it turned out, our house went black at the stroke of midnight. All the kids screamed at the darkness and we lost all communication with the outside world via our television. Well, guess what? George had gone out and pulled the breaker and shut down all the power to the house. Who else would have thought of that?

George has retired from farming but still resides on the family farm. Much against his better judgement, he took a woodcarving course only to discover that he has a hidden talent, probably passed down from his father. He now carves and finishes beautiful diamond willow walking sticks and canes.

Among his other great loves in life are fishing and hunting. One year, when he was hunting, he wounded a big moose. It circled around and came back to him. The moose came to a stop about 15 feet

in front of George and just stood there. Randy, about 12 years old, and Steven Bolle, about nine years old, were on the trike just behind George. When he was trying to put the bullet into the rifle, it jammed. He pushed so hard on the hammer, that it pushed the lead ¼ of an inch back into the shell! He then had to eject the bullet and try another shell. The moose patiently waited and then when George finally aimed at the large beast, all he could see was fur. He took the deadly shot, and ½ hour later began to shake when he realized what could have happened. Someone was looking out for them that day.



Winter Transportation – Ida, Charles, Marie and George Van Hove – 1950

Many times they have gone fishing with their good friends Rose and Remi Bolle. They were at Orloff Lake one year and Rose and George had a wager on the heaviest fish. Not to be outdone, Rose stuffed a smaller fish down the throat of a larger one and won the wager. The war was on when George found out what had happened.

In 2004 George and Lydia took their first trip as snowbirds to southern Arizona and California. It really must have gotten into their blood as they planned the trip again for the winter of 2004-2005.

George and Lydia are anxiously awaiting the birth of their first great-grandchild in May from Lorne's oldest daughter Jodi.

Randy is looking forward to taking over the family farm when his dad is ready to pull up stakes and move on.

Van Hove, Joe

By Joe Van Hove

I was born on September 16, 1945 in Edmonton at the old Misericordia Hospital. I attended St Charles School in Mearns from grade one to grade

nine then went to Camilla High School in Riviere Qui Barre for grade 10. Our family attended St Charles Parish in Mearns. I was an altar boy starting with Father Merchant and then later Father Gregory Rijniers. While I was an altar boy, I served at my sister Marie's wedding to Francis Weisgerber.

Our family kept in close contact with Father Gregory even after he left the St. Charles Parish in Mearns.

At the end of my grade 10 school term, I decided I wanted to pursue a trade rather than staying in school, so I worked for Mills Motors in Alcomdale, assembling machinery. In 1964 I came to Edmonton and started working at Western Mack Truck as an apprentice heavy duty mechanic, which I continued doing until 1998 when a work related injury forced me to change careers. I still work for the same company. They are now known as Nortrax Inc. and I am a service advisor working in the Service Department. I have been with this company for over 40 years and plan to retire soon.

In 1967 I met Shirley Girard from Edmonton at a dance in Sion and we got married on October 19, 1968. We have two sons, Kevin, born in 1969 and Duane in 1971. We still live in Edmonton and spend our free time on weekends camping in our motor home with family and friends. We love to travel to Vancouver Island on our vacations and would love to retire there, or at least spend more than a few days there at one time.

Vandenhouten, Edward & Alice

By the family



Ed and Alice Vandenhouten

Edward David Vandenhouten, son of Leon Vandenhouten and Marie Swiggers was born November 17, 1916 in the County of Kent, England. Three years later his brother, Jules, was born on January 31, 1919 in Belgium. At the age of three, Ed and his family immigrated to Canada and settled on a homestead northwest of Morinville, near Egg Lake. His younger sister Marriette was born at the homestead.

In 1929, at the young age of 13, Ed lost his father in a car accident. He carried on helping his mother with the farm.

Alice Perrault, the fifth of six children, was born on October 22, 1922 to Euclide Perrault and Tillie Labbe.

Edward and Alice were married on January 16, 1941 at St. Joseph Cathedral in Edmonton with a reception at the Royal George Hotel.

Following the wedding, Ed & Alice lived with Ed's mother until the spring of 1942 when they moved northwest of Egg Lake to farm their homestead. Ed took up welding at Jacob's Welding School in west Edmonton (old Jasper Place). While still farming, Ed took on more work for Slim Charest at a service station in Morinville.

Struggling with the farm and raising a family, Ed worked underground at Starkey Coal Mine along with his sons Richard & Norman for several years. He also became a grader operator for the M.D. of Sturgeon for a number of years. After continued struggling with farming, in 1969 Ed & Alice made the decision to uproot the youngest six children and moved to a logging camp near Valleyview where Ed worked as a millwright and Alice as a camp cook. Several years later they moved back to the farm but Ed continued to work away from home as a millwright.

Less than two years later the family moved to Whitecourt where Alice took on work in a local restaurant and Ed continued to work away from home. A year later, Ed and Alice moved the four youngest to again work in a logging camp, this time in Lodgepole just outside of Drayton Valley. This lasted for several years then Ed was offered a better job with Revelstoke Saw Mill in Nordegg, west of Rocky Mountain House. Alice once again became the camp cook and the girls went to school in Rocky Mountain House.

When the mill shut down, Ed and Alice were forced to move again. By this time several of the boys had settled in Whitecourt so Ed & Alice made their home in Whitecourt. Both continued to work for a number of years, this time for DeWitt Gravel Crushing, which took them to various locations in northern Alberta such as Grande Prairie and the

Peace River country. Ed & Alice spent their last years living on an acreage with their son Norman. Alice died July 7, 1992 after a short but courageous battle with cancer; Edward died March 3, 1994.

Together Ed and Alice had twelve children: Denis, Madelain, Richard, Andrew, Norman, Carmen, Roger, Paul, Irene, Simone, Laura and Vivian.



Family of Ed and Alice Vandenhouten. Back row L to R: Simone, Norman, Roger, Richard, Denis, Paul, Irene. Front row L to R: Vivian, Laura, Edward, Alice, Madelain, Carmen

Denis was born December 28, 1941. He married Bernice Horner of Edmonton on June 15, 1968. Bernice died June 5, 2004. Denis found happiness again and married Cheryl on May 27, 2006. Denis became a certified welder and worked for Arne's Trailer until his retirement. Feeling the need to keep busy, Denis continues to work from his home in the Spruce Grove – Stony Plain area.

Madelain was born February 18, 1943. She married Eugene Scantland of Morinville on October 23, 1961. Madelain joined Canada Post as a mail carrier in St. Albert and is currently employed with Canada Post in Morinville.

Richard was born June 11, 1944. He married Rachel Proulx of Morinville on October 17, 1964. Richard received his welding ticket in 1971 and was hired as a contractor with his welding truck for Northwestern Utilities for 21 years. During his years with N.W.U. he welded on many pipelines

throughout Alberta. In 1990 Richard built a shop just outside of Legal where he currently operates Springfield Welding.

Andrew was born on July 31, 1945 and later died on August 7th of the same year.

Norman was born September 15, 1946. He married Georgette Pare of Legal on April 20, 1968. Norman & Georgette were school bus contractors in the Whitecourt area for a numbers of years. He then owned and operated Mountain View Promotions (advertising and engraving) until he lost a courageous battle with cancer on January 1, 2006.

Carmen was born on August 17, 1949 and married Remi Morin of Legal on June 14, 1969. Carmen worked for Alberta Government Telephones for seven years and then, in 1976, with the birth of her first child, decided to stay home and raise her family. Being involved in the community, Carmen worked from home as Recreation Board Secretary, which led to full time employment with the Town of Legal until her retirement in October 2006.

Roger was born on January 12, 1953 and married Roberta Burns of Whitecourt on November 19, 1975. Roger has worked in the oil field most his life and currently operates his own oilrig moving business in the Whitecourt area.

Paul was born April 10, 1955 and married Jessie Cartwright of Whitecourt on April 16, 1977. Paul also worked in the oil field trucking business and now owns and operates trucking and oil field rentals.

Irene was born December 4, 1956 and married Nelson Bayford June 12, 1976. Irene re-married on



The Vandenhoutens gather for school reunion in 2004. Back row L to R: Paul, Norman, Richard, Denis, Roger. Centre: Vivian. Front row: Irene, Simone, Carmen, Madelain

August 1, 1987 to Joe Penimpede of Victoria, B.C. Through hard work and determination, Irene became a chiropractor. This meant leaving her family & friends behind and moving to Portland, Oregon to complete her studies where she graduated at the top of her class. In 1992, Irene moved to Victoria and practiced chiropractic medicine with another chiropractor. She now operates her chiropractic clinic from her home.

Simone was born August 3, 1958 and married Allan Reid of Whitecourt on July 22, 1978. Allan died suddenly on September 16, 2003. Al & Sam (Simone)'s third child was Whitecourt's New Year's baby for 1991. Simone worked various positions within the Whitecourt Health Care Unit, which is now under Aspen Health where she is currently employed. Sam, along with her daughter, own and operate Poplar Ridge Riding Academy. During the summer months they have as many as 15 students per week learning how to care for and ride horses.

Laura was born September 13, 1960 and married Kelly Larsen of Whitecourt on February 16, 1980. Laura was tragically taken from her family in a vehicle accident on August 28, 1983.

Vivian was born September 14, 1961 and married David Hewlett of Stettler on March 19, 1981. With Dave working as an oilfield operator Vivian lived all over Alberta (Wizard Lake, Eckville, Stettler). She has now settled at Luseland, Sask. Vivian worked most of the time as a document controller for petrochemical companies. She now owns and operates a tanning bed and fitness centre.

Vandersteen, Donald & Carol (Brenneis)

By Carol Vandersteen

I finished school at St. Albert High School in 1970 and took off for the bright lights of Edmonton. There I started work at Boston Pizza as a waitress. The intention was to work the summer and then go to school for a Nurses Aide, a program I had already been accepted into. I met a tall dark fellow who drove a nice blue convertible Barracuda. He worked at the same Boston Pizza store, so according to the company policy, we could not date until one of us transferred. Don was working the manager's holidays so he moved on and the field was clear for us. He drove down 124th street looking for me walking to work. When he spotted me he pulled up and said "Stick your thumb out and I'll pick you up." So I did and since then he has said I'm a pickup. Funny man. 124th street was a much nicer, safer place back then. Things got serious and on August 13, 1971 Donald John Vandersteen from Winfield, Alberta and I were married. We lived in



Carol and Don Vandersteen – Aug. 14, 1971 – Mearns Hall

Edmonton, moving all over the city as his job dictated. In the first four years of our marriage, we lived in five different apartments.

During that time, our first daughter, Sonia Teresa, joined the family on November 17, 1972. She was premature and very tiny – 4lbs 12oz. Mom was at my wedding but died early on during my pregnancy. The family was still reeling from the shock, so when Sonia came along with her unconditional love, as with all little children, she helped us to heal. Little did she know she had the whole family wrapped around her little finger. I didn't have any babysitters I trusted other than my brothers and sisters so, when Greg was living with Kevin and Chris Kluthe in Edmonton, the three boys, ages 16, 17 or so, babysat my girl. When I told Chris and Kevin's Mom at the Mearns reunion she was shocked that I let those three young boys take care of my girl. They did well; she survived.

Our second daughter, Katherine Elizabeth was born June 25, 1975. She was full term but the Doctor induced her, making it a difficult delivery. When she was three weeks old, we moved out of Edmonton to our own trailer in the Morinville trailer park.

We lived there for about five years. Sonia went to her first year of school in the yellow school – Notre Dame School. She was enrolled in the French Immersion Program. We lived within a block of my cousin Janice, and Sonia and her daughter, Shawna,

were only five months apart in age and they really got along well. So, when they were about four years old, they walked to each others house (under both Mom's eyes) feeling like very independent little girls. Kathy was a quiet little girl who liked to stick close to her Mom and Dad. However, Kathy's big soft brown eyes were the downfall of her Uncle Greg and if she'd have known, she could have had anything she wanted. Uncle Dave also was a fixture of life as he used to come over for dinner with the girls several times a week as he worked in town at the shell station for Bert Ouellette.

A year after Kathy, our Roxanne Erica was born on October 19, 1976. This is 38 years to the date her grandparents were married. Her due date was October 18 but Grandpa said she needed to wait one day and she did. Listened to her grandpa, good girl. Roxy was a child who had a lot of things to do and people to see so stay out of her way. Life was very busy with three little girls all under the age of five. When she was a year old, we decided that the trailer was too small and purchased a house in Legal. The oldest house in Legal; a log home. The yard was huge with many mature trees. The girls loved the yard and they could continue their French Immersion education.

At this time, David bought a home in Legal as well. Since we had two weeks till we could move into our house, we moved in with Dave. He had some mouse problems. One night, Don and I had just gone to bed upstairs when Dave came home from an evening out and I heard the mouse trap snap. I called out "Dave, you have a varmint in the trap." "Oh, I do?" he asked. Checked and sure enough he did. He reset the trap snapping his fingers "Oww!" He went to the bathroom and when he came out I called "Dave, you have a varmint in the varmint trap."

"Again?"

"Yup." Checked and sure enough he did and again reset the trap, snapping his fingers again @#***?? Does something (I don't remember what), again I call out, "Dave, got another one!"

Snort, "Another one?!", and sure enough, again he snapped his fingers.

@#***?? again and Don and I nearly dying of laughter, "Dave!"

"WHAT?"

"Got a varmint in the trap!"

He checked and sure enough, but this time he said, "Hey there's two little ones side by side!" He caught five mice in about twenty minutes that night. We nearly fell out of bed laughing at him snapping his fingers. I hate mice!

Within two years or so our son, Andrew Donald,

was born on April 16, 1980. Don was so sure it was going to be a boy he would not even talk girls names. Andy was as blond as our girls were dark haired. He had a cowlick in the same place as I do so I always thought of it as my stamp on him saying he was mine. We were a little concerned as to whether our son would be a girly boy with all those sisters. Well, when he developed a truck motor around six months, we knew there was nothing to worry about. Andy was a climber and always trying to give his Mom gray hair. Just remember, Andy, what goes around, comes around.

When Andy was almost three, we had our second son, Daniel John on March 22, 1983. By this time the girls understood what it meant to name a baby and when Don wouldn't discuss girls names they said, "It's OK, Daddy. We'll call her Daisy after Daisy Dukes of Hazzard." After that we talked about girls names! Danny was a big boy and again blond with a cowlick, just like his brother.

We lived in Legal until June of 1990. That June, Sonia graduated and we moved to Tomahawk. Kathy went to high school at Frank Maddock High School in Drayton Valley. Roxanne, Andy and Danny went to school in Tomahawk. In grade nine, Roxy and Andy went to H.W. Pickup in Drayton Valley. Five years later, 1995, we moved to Winfield to the farm that Don had grown up on. While Roxanne finished her high school at Frank Maddock, the boys finished their school at Buck Mountain Central High School, a junior/senior school. I also started to work at the school eight years ago. I worked as an aide to a student with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) for six years. This last year I was an aide to the grade seven class. The assignment was busy, and as well, I was taking courses to complete my Teacher Aide (TA) Certificate. The school division offered to pay for half of my schooling so, since I was half way there, I took them up on their offer. Don has recently



Don & Carol (Brenneis) Vandersteen Family on Carol's 50th Birthday and Don & Carol's 30th Wedding Anniversary. Back row: Danny, Don, Gary Hiebert, Andrew, Aaron Barrett. Front row: Brennan Berry, Roxanne, Carol, Sonia, Kathy

started his own business. He and a partner bought a picker truck and hope to gain work in the oilfield working on leases and pipelines. We are still on the farm. Don's parents are in the yard as well, and it is a very beautiful area. This was a good community to raise our boys in. The farm has a special place in our children's hearts and the country is a refuge for our children, as it was for us as children. Here you can forget all the worries that are waiting out there for you.

Over the years as we talk, you find out more about what your kids did. Roxanne always seemed to get into trouble but I found out she took it for the team. The story is that Roxy was little enough to climb up on the high chair that stood beside the fridge and reach the cookie jar. She would get up, lift up the lid, someone would call "Mom, Roxanne is in the cookie jar!" I would say, "get out of the cookies, Roxy." She would say, "OK", all the while handing cookies out to her sisters, the ones who set her up!

Sonia Vandersteen Hiebert & Gary Richard Hiebert

Following her graduation from high school in 1990, Sonia went on to pursue her Education Degree at the Faculté St. Jean, University of Alberta. One of Sonia's roommates was her cousin, Shawna Krywko, eldest daughter of Louis and Janice (Brenneis) Krywko. During their two years together as roomies, the girls were courted by their husbands to be. Dean, the cowboy and excellent two-stepper, caught Shawna's eye, while Gary, the university student, kept insisting on driving out from Saskatoon to Edmonton to see Sonia. How could she resist!?



L to R: Gary Hiebert, Genna (Genevieve), Gabriel and Sonia – 2005

Sonia had met Gary Richard Hiebert from North Battleford, Saskatchewan in Penticton, BC in the fall of 1991, while both her family and his were attending a church convention. The next year Sonia and Gary began dating, traveling between North

Battleford and Edmonton most every weekend. Many of their Saskatchewan dates had Sonia sitting on a stool next to Gary while he played drums for his dad's band. She was quite the groupie! They were engaged in Saskatoon, July 13, 1993 at the foot of the Victoria Avenue Iron Bridge. They were married May 7, 1994 in Cardiff Hall surrounded by 200 of their family and friends. Gary's little red 1988 Mustang is still blowing confetti from its vents all these years later (Thank you Aunt Gloria!). This was the beginning of Aunt Karen's career as wedding photographer, and she is very good. Some of her photos are featured in the Information Pamphlet for Fort McMurray, I believe.

Gary convoked in the fall of 1994 with an Education Degree from the University of Saskatchewan. His first teaching job was in Loon Lake, Saskatchewan, where he and Sonia lived for three years. Sonia worked as a teacher assistant for their first year then went on to complete her Education Degree at the University of Regina in the spring of 1997. From there, Sonia and Gary moved to Swift Current where they both taught at the Comprehensive High School for two years. In the fall of 1999, they moved back to Saskatoon, Sonia teaching in Wakaw and Gary teaching in Warman.

The summer of 2001, Sonia and Gary made one last move to Lacombe, Alberta. Gary got a teaching position at Mirror School while Sonia got a grade four French Immersion maternity leave position at Lacombe Upper Elementary School. She was unable to complete the term, as she needed to take maternity leave as well. Their first child, Genevieve (Genna) Carlena, was born May 5, 2002 at Red Deer Hospital and about time according to all of us waiting to be Grandparents, Uncles and Aunties, never mind the Great Aunties and Great Uncles. (Eight years! But who's counting!).

Their second child was born two years later, Gabriel (Babe) Daniel, on April 25, 2004. This young man is going to set the world on its ear and Mom and Dad with it. He walked at nine months and has not stopped. Genna takes her time and makes sure she knows what she is doing and is comfortable with everything. Gabe charges ahead. Many a gray hair can be laid at that young man's feet, teetering on the edge of the top stair!

Presently, both Sonia and Gary are teaching at Lacombe Junior High School. Gary is also working on his Masters Degree in Adult Education through the University of Calgary. Sonia is considering doing her Masters Degree as well, but finds life a little occupied at the moment!

Genna and Gabe are busy keeping their Mom and Dad busy! They love their Aunts and Uncles and

have become excellent travelers as they make frequent car trips to see both sets of grandparents, whom they adore. They are wonderful kids who know just when not to be wonderful! Must be from the Byer side!!

Katherine Elizabeth Vandersteen & Aaron Jack Barrett

By Katherine

Aaron is from Drayton Valley and we married on August 23, 1997 in Breton, Alberta. Aaron and I attended high school together at Frank Maddock High School in Drayton Valley. We met at school and were friends until graduation when we moved to Edmonton. A chance encounter at a bus stop in Edmonton rekindled the friendship, which grew into a romantic relationship early in 1994. We dated for the next three years.



Kathy & Aaron Barrett – Aug. 1997

Late in 1996, Aaron was laid off from his job. On that day he went to a jewelry store in West Edmonton Mall and bought a beautiful sapphire ring. He then drove to Nisku to talk with my Dad. He asked Dad if he could have his blessing to ask me to marry him. Dad said yes and Aaron went to meet me at my apartment. It was a very cold, snowy night in December. We left my tiny apartment in downtown Edmonton and walked in the legislature grounds, which were all lit up with tiny white lights for Christmas. Aaron dropped to one knee and asked me to marry him. The crowd of onlookers cheered when I said “yes”.

Aaron and I lived in Edmonton until 2001 when we moved to Airdrie for Aaron’s new job. Currently, Aaron is working as an Instrument Technician (IT) professional in Calgary and I am a teacher in Crossfield. We are building a home in Airdrie and are looking forward to starting a family in the near future.

Roxanne Erica Vandersteen & Brennan William Barry

Roxanne went to college for two years and there met her husband, Brennan William Barry. They dated for two years, lived together for two years and married on August 6, 2000. In August, Roxanne decided to try teaching English as a second language to little children in China. She wrote me about her experiences. Here are some of her thoughts.



Roxanne & Brennan Barry – Aug. 2000

“We trekked four miles on the first day hoping this would get us ready for the 14 mile hike on the wall the next day. Ha, ha, jokes on us. The first portion of the wall we hit is one that has not been repaired or renovated. At times we were walking on a rock that there is no ground to be seen under. Scary stuff, but absolutely beautiful and amazing. The next day we climbed the “most famous” portion of the great wall. This part has been almost completely repaired so no amazing walks like the day before, but still amazing. The steps were what amazed me the most. Some of them came up to my knees or higher and others, you barely had to lift your feet off the ground. I did manage to call Mom and Dad from the top of the great wall, only to

report to Dad that all I saw was scrub brush!! Also, as requested by my sisters, I sang O Canada in both English and French – I'm sure a proud moment for all Canadians within earshot! I have also seen the summer palace and the Forbidden City. They are not much of an adventure but are filled with amazing artifacts and museum pieces. You learn a lot of history. The one thing that sticks in my mind is walking through Tiananmen Square. You need to walk through the Square to get to the Forbidden City. An eerie feeling lingers over the Square. The official line is that nothing happened there, but you can feel the hurt and despair. It is very saddening. This is probably one of my favourite places, because just walking through it taught me so much. Roxanne"

To me, eating things with their heads on is something I'm not sure I could manage. She came back for ten days and has returned for another year. Never in all my life would I have imagined a child of mine in China, but there you go!! Kids!!



Jenny Watrin & Andrew Vandersteen – engaged Dec. 2005

Our son, Andrew, took two years of Forestry at NAIT. For five years, Andrew worked as a Helitack – that is he fought wild fires for Alberta Sustainable Resources. He flew around in a helicopter and when they spotted a fire or smoke, they would call it in and then were the initial attack on the scene. While doing this, Andy met a beautiful tall blond girl by the name of Jenny Jean Watrin from the Pincher Creek area. They have recently gotten engaged, with a wedding planned for September 2006. Jenny has

her Resource Management Certificate and a Bachelor of Environmental Science Degree from Lethbridge University. Jenny works as a Water Technologist for Alberta Environment. Andy has also made some changes by moving down to Brooks, Alberta, where he is pursuing his heavy-duty mechanics ticket.



Danny meeting his nephew Gabriel in May 2004.

Danny has always wanted to be an RCMP Officer. He has taken a Criminal Justice Certificate at Lethbridge College and is now working on his BA in Criminal Justice through Athabasca University, taken on the LCC Campus. During the summer, he works at a local company doing oilfield service. He also volunteers with the fire department in Winfield. As children grow older and larger, they sometimes get to get back at their tormentors. This is the case for Danny and his Uncle Greg. Dan is about three to four inches taller than his uncle. In 2004, we had a family reunion up in Fort McMurray and the guys went quading. They, of course, got everything wet and muddy. Greg got everything on video for posterity but Dan felt it was his turn. Dan walked up to Uncle Greg, put his arm around Greg's neck, looked at him and said, "you know your going in, Unc." Greg put up a good fight, but in he went. The camera was kept safe, but not him... too much fun!

Vansevenandt, Mark & Kerry

By Kerry Vansevenandt (Lutz)

Kerry Lutz, daughter of Joseph and Evelyn Lutz, was born on May 23, 1971. I was the sixth



November 2004 – Mark and Kerry (Lutz) Vansevenandt Family – Back row L to R: Mark, Siria, Dana. Front row: Vanessa, Kerry, Amanda

child of nine. My siblings are, oldest to youngest, Marie, Doreen, Judy, Jo-Anne, Danny, Wayne, Michael and Jackie. I grew up on a mixed farm in the Morinville area SE 18-56-26-W4.

I attended Camilla School for grades K-9 and Sturgeon Composite High School for grades 10-12. I graduated in 1990. I was baptized on June 13, 1971 and received the sacrament of Eucharist at St. Charles Parish in 1978.

Childhood memories:

Long before the work on the farm became too demanding, my younger siblings and I would

explore the pastures, forests, creeks and swamps on our homestead. In the spring we often went searching for frog eggs, tadpoles and frogs in the creek across the road. The duck eggs were a rare find. We learned from messing with the geese not to get too close to the duck eggs.

There were a couple of times when the creek was flooded. When the danger of fast flowing water had subsided, we would take our homemade rafts (made from fence posts) and float on the creek. What I loved most of all was walking along the creek in the cattle pasture when the snow had just melted – the peacefulness of the water flowing gently over the rocks as it wound through the hills.

I married Mark Vansevenandt on July 11, 1992. We live on a farm east of Morinville NW 1-56-25-W4. We are blessed with four daughters. Siria was born April 6, 1993, Dana, October 15, 1994, Vanessa, December 3, 1996, and Amanda, January 22, 2000. At this writing Siria is in grade seven, Dana is in grade six, Vanessa is in grade four and Amanda is in grade one.

Vansevenandt, Richard & Marie

By Marie Vansevenandt (nee Lutz, Joe)

Richard, son of Roger and Isabel Vansevenandt, was born March 6, 1962. He attended school in Morinville and after graduating in 1980 he continued to work on the family farm. In the midst of all this hard work in the hog and grain business, he met and fell in love with Marie Lutz.



Farmsite of Mark & Kerry Vansevenandt – 1994



The Vansevenandt Family, 2005. Back row: Kim, Joyce, and Ron. Front row: Marie, Melody, Richard

Marie was born May 9, 1961 and is the eldest child of Joseph and Evelyn Lutz. She rode John Polakovits' bus to St. Charles School in Mearns where she completed first and second grade and it was in Mearns where she received her Baptism, First Communion, Reconciliation and Confirmation. Sadly, the school of Mearns closed down and Marie continued grades three through nine at Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre. She entered St Albert High for grade 10 and moved to the newly built Sturgeon Composite High School to complete grades 11 and 12. She also continued to help on the family mixed farm after graduating in 1979.

Richard and Marie married on April 9, 1983 and decided to break away from their family farms and take on a farm of their own in the Mearns area. Together they bought a farm from Richard's parents who had previously bought from John and Virginia Altmiks. Within the next seven years, in the midst of running a hog and grain farm, they were also blessed with four wonderful children: Joyce Marie was born December 27, 1983, Kim Sandra, born June 2, 1985, Melody Dawn, born May 29, 1988 and Ron Richard, born May 21, 1990.

All of their children attended Camilla School for primary, elementary and junior high. Additionally, they all attended Catechism classes and have all received their First Communion, Reconciliation and Confirmation in Mearns at St. Charles Church.

Joyce graduated from Sturgeon Composite High in 2001 and, following in her parents' footsteps, worked on the family farm for a few years before entering NAIT where she completed her first year of Construction Engineering. She helps on the farm when she is able.

Kim graduated from Sturgeon in 2003 and

worked on the farm for six months before she became the first child to leave the nest and attend Grant MacEwan College. She is working on her Arts/Education Degree. Nonetheless, Kim returns to help on the farm on weekends.

Melody has just recently completed grade 11 and remains undecided about what she wants to do after graduation, and Ron is excited to enter the whole new world of high school in the fall.

(Since the writing of this story, Marie passed away on October 4, 2007 after fighting a courageous battle with cancer.)

Verhulst, Eddie (Edward Rene) & Mary

By the family



Back row L to R: Vic Verhulst, Bertha Dubois, Clarence Verhulst, Selenna Verhulst. Front row: Ed and Mary Verhulst

Joe Verhulst departed Belgium for Winnipeg, Canada on April 20, 1913. He then went by train to Edmonton. When he was walking down Kingsway Avenue he met Emile Lema and went to work for him in the Villeneuve area. In early 1918, Joe started working for Remi Soetaert, where he met Mary Victoor. With Mary and Joe both working on the same farm it is no wonder romance bloomed and grew. They were married on March 4, 1919 at St. Emerence Church in Riviere Qui Barre, Alberta.

Joe Verhulst was a butcher and meat cutter by trade so was in great demand in the area. He took up farming four miles west and one mile south of Morinville. Joe and Mary had five children: Edward Rene in 1920, Walter, born October 24, 1921 and died October 29, 1921, Bertha in 1923, Victor in 1924, Clarence in 1926 and Agnes, born July 24, 1928 and died October 2, 1929.

Ed took over the farming operation and later moved to a larger farm near Egg Lake, Alberta. Ed Verhulst and Mary Louise Perrott were married April 25, 1944 at St. Emerence Church in Riviere



The Verhulst Family – Back row L to R: Ernie Mock (married to Louise), Melvin Verhulst, Gary Verhulst, Doug Freeman (married to Jeanette), Vern Verhulst. Center row L to R: Darren Verhulst (married to Tracy Clark), Judy Beard (married to Melvin), Sandra Gates (married to Gary), Susan Krechenuik (married to Vern), Doreen (married to Damian Healy), Edward Verhulst Jr. Bottom row L to R: Elaine (married to Monty Buechler), Louise, Ed and Mary, Lorette (married to Ted Reiniger), Jeanette

Qui Barre, Alberta. Ed and Mary moved to the Mearns-Alcomdale area to farm in 1949/50. The farm was located one half mile east and one and a half miles north of Mearns.

At this time their family included children Melvin, born in 1945, Vernon, in 1946 and Louise, in 1947.

Ed and Mary bought a house and moved it onto the farm. They then built a barn and filled it with beautiful Holstein milk cows. The next move in developing the farm was the purchase of a pig barn from the Massie's. Ed owned and operated the school bus from 1949 to 1952. However, in the summer of 1952, the bus burned and Maurice Bugnet bought a bus and took over the route.

Of course there was much work to be done as land had to be broken, fences and granaries built and put in place, and the mixed farming operation made to function. One warm summer day in July, a day not to be forgotten, a tornado came through the farm destroying a pump house and tractor shed but leaving the rest of the buildings intact.

As a family, we enjoyed cramming into the car to head for "Buck Night" at the St. Albert Drive-In to watch Ma and Pa Kettle or some other great old

movie. By this time Doreen was part of the family 1950, Jeanette 1951, Gary 1952, Lorette 1956, Elaine 1959, Edward Jr. 1962 and Darren 1965.

The Verhulst farm was hailed out three years in a row so Ed went to work for the Egg Lake Coal Mine in the late 1950's as a truck driver, hauling coal from the coal pits to the tipples. The Verhulst children attended St. Charles School in Mearns and the family was part of the Catholic Church. Some of the older girls enjoyed singing in the church choir. They wouldn't let us older boys up in the choir because we couldn't sing those high notes. The boys enjoyed playing baseball in Mearns and then for the Alcomdale Baseball Team.

We had great neighbors with the Brenneis and Bugnet families to the south and the Cunningham, Van Hove and Massie families to the north. We have fond memories of going to church and then to the Sheehan store to spend our 25-cent allowance each Sunday. The Mearns and Alcomdale communities were greatly appreciated by the family and gave us many great memories.

Ed and Mary decided to give up farming and moved into Edmonton in 1966. Ed became a milkman for Purity Dairies, later picked up cream



Ed and Mary Verhulst on their 50th wedding anniversary in March of 1969

for NADP Dairy, and then went driving a tanker, picking up milk from the dairy farmers around the Edmonton area. Ed retired in January of 1985.

Ed and Mary have ten children:

Melvin (1945), Vernon (1946), Louise (1947), Doreen (1950), Jeanette (1951), Gary (1952), Lorette (1956), Elaine (1959), Edward Jr. (1962) and Darren (1965). They also have thirty-two grandchildren, twenty-one great grandchildren and one great great grandchild.

Vezina, Philippe & Ida (Van Hove)

By Ida Vezina



1938 – Ida Van Hove, Alphonse Granger and George Van Hove

Phil was born on November 18, 1929 in Willowbunch, Saskatchewan. He was the youngest of five children born to Maurice and Louisiana Vezina. A year later his family moved to Alhambra, Alberta and in 1937, because of his father's ill health, they moved to New Westminster, BC. He was 14 years old when his father passed away, so as soon as he could manage by himself he took off to the prairies to work for his uncles.

In the early 1950s he and his brother, Marcel, worked in the lumber camps in Alberta. Shortly after that he got into truck driving which became his profession.

Phil and I were married on July 5th, 1955 in St. Charles Church at Mearns. Father Gregory performed our marriage service.

Phil was driving truck for BA out of Westlock at the time. From there we moved to Edmonton where Phil tried several different jobs.

Our first child, a son, Maurice, was born on July 27, 1957 at Misericordia Hospital in Edmonton. He was baptized at St. Charles, Mearns.

In June of 1958 we took holidays to Merritt, BC where Phil's two sisters and his mother lived. They talked us into staying. His mother gave us a town lot worth \$200 then. Soon Phil got a job and the following year we started building a three-bedroom house. From 1961 to 1964 we ran a second hand store with Phil's mother.



Philippe and Ida (Van Hove) Vezina. Top L to R: Pauline, Marie and Maurice

On February 17, 1962 our second child, Marie, was born in the Nicola Valley General Hospital here in Merritt. A few years later on December 7, 1965, Pauline, our third and youngest child was born here in Merritt as well.

We lived one block from Sacred Heart Church.

I joined the Catholic Women's League in the 1960's and have been active in it since. I was on the Parish Council for a few years and a Eucharistic Minister.

Phil drove truck for the Imperial Esso Bulk Plant and continued there until his retirement in 1988.

As a family we enjoyed taking holidays every summer back home to the Van Hove farm. We did a lot of fishing and camping on the weekends around our area.

We belonged to a square dance club for 20 some years, good exercise and entertainment. We met many nice and friendly people. Phil's hobby was woodwork and fixing small engines, small appliances, etc. He was a member of the Knight of Columbus.

I enjoyed sewing, knitting and family. We both enjoyed gardening.

All our children received their childhood sacraments at Sacred Heart Parish and all graduated from Merritt Secondary School.

Maurice married Sheila Peeters and they live in Prince George, BC. They have one son, Adam, who is 10 years old. Maurice has been with the Save-On meat department for 28 years.

Marie married Fred Davis and lives in Merritt. They have two girls, Jessica, 20 and Mandi, 18. Marie works part time at Sacred Heart parish office and is the religious education coordinator for the parish.

Pauline lives in Penticton, BC. She has a boy, Brody, 10 and a girl, Cortney, eight. Pauline is Center Administrator at the Academy of Learning School in Penticton.

Philippe passed away on February 13, 2004 from a stroke at age 74. I continue to live in our two-bedroom home in downtown Merritt.



The Vezina Grandchildren – 2004. Top: Jessica and Mandi Davis. Bottom: Adam Vezina, Cortney and Brody Cullen

Victoor, Jamie & Deanna

By Deanna Victoor

Our history in Mearns began long after the horse and buggy days. As newcomers to the area, we didn't travel from afar, but from the neighboring hamlet of Villeneuve, from the Victoor family farm to our own acreage located at NW 15-56-26-W4 in July of 1998. The day we moved, our convoy of seven loaded vehicles traveled in a haze of smoke drifting all the way from the Slave Lake forest fires. The original owners of our home, Brian and Mary Harris, moved down the road and we became neighbours on Range Road 263.

Two of our children, Justin James, born April 14, 1986, and Jesse Austin, born August 15, 1989, transferred from Sturgeon Heights School to Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre. Justin entered grade seven and Jesse entered grade four. Our third son, Jayden Rene, born January 12, 1993, began Kindergarten at Camilla School. Our daughter, Jori Marie, born January 30, 1996, (being the youngest and in withdrawal without her brothers) joined the Mearns Playschool, adding a "backpack" to her weekly routine too!

Along with us came our four legged family members; Cutey (our red healer dog), Blaze (Justin's horse) and Lady (Jesse's horse). Corrals needed to be built and the back of our acreage needed to be fenced before our horses could join us. Justin's 4-H cattle completed our animal family.

With each of our children come different interests, completing their individuality. Justin played Knights of Columbus basketball and soccer in St. Albert. He had a keen interest in cattle, leading him into the Riviere Qui Barre 4-H Beef Club.

Jesse played soccer and hockey in St. Albert. Prior to our move, Jesse moved from the St. Albert league to the Riviere Qui Barre league where he continues to play hockey. He joined his brother in 4-H but eventually his love of motocross soon became more involved and he gave up his show stick for the race track.

Jayden plays soccer, volleyball, basketball and fun hockey. He is active in both Mearns and Riviere Qui Barre churches, teaching Sunday school, serving, and assisting in the catechism program. Jayden participates in Hip Hop and school plays. His love of cattle keeps him busy doing chores for his 4-H beef projects.

Jori has been in jazz and ballet dancing since she was three years old. She enjoys piano lessons, and athletics, playing soccer for Riviere Qui Barre and running in the Running Club at Camilla School.

Jamie continues to farm with his dad, Rene



Jamie and Deanna Victoor family photo taken October 2006.
From L to R: Jayden, Jesse, Justin, Jori, Jamie, Deanna

Victoor, commuting to the family farm. They are partners in their registered seed grain business and up until a few years ago were active in the dairy business. Jamie's pastime involves playing hockey for the Riviere Qui Barre Relics and coaching Jesse and Jayden's hockey teams.

I, Deanna, have been a substitute teacher for 17 years for both school districts in St. Albert and Sturgeon. I taught part-time music at Neil M. Ross School in St. Albert, returning to subbing after the birth of our third son, Jayden. I taught the Mearns Pre-School program for two years when Jori was a little student. Teaching Sunday School in St. Albert was another "teaching pastime", and with the support of Father Paul Terrio, I brought the program

to Calahoo and Villeneuve. Eventually, I was asked to start the program in Riviere Qui Barre and Mearns, and have continued to organize teachers and teach in two churches for eleven years. At present I also teach catechism at St. Emerence in Riviere Qui Barre and help facilitate the Youth Gatherings. Singing, playing the piano and writing songs are passionate pastime involvements of mine. I have also been capturing memories for wedding couples and families for twelve years through photo shoots.

We enjoy the quiet and peaceful countryside, shared by wonderful faith families in the community of Mearns.

Footnote. For many years Deanna and her family have attended the Remembrance Day celebrations at the Legion Hall in Morinville to honour the Veterans by presenting each with a home made gift or a song. It is a tradition the Victoor family started when the children were very young. Their attendance is always appreciated and everyone looks forward to seeing these young adults and their parents.

Warshawski, Walter & Mary Family

By Rose Robertson (Warshawski)

From 1949 to 1971 our family owned a half-section of land situated between one and two miles south of Alcomdale, the E $\frac{1}{2}$ 30-56-26-W4th. My parents, Walter and Mary, moved to the farm in the spring of 1949 with children Mary Anne, John, and Linda, who was slightly over one year of age at that time.



Warshawski farm in early 1960's

They purchased their farm from the Stevens family, who had resided there for approximately 20 years. They had built our house, a semi-bungalow, a barn of substantial size, and several other buildings. The Stevens also extensively landscaped the yard areas, planting numerous rows of spruce, pine, maple, and carragana, as well as raspberries, crabapples, and other fruit trees. To resemble an English garden style, they built arbour gateways and a gazebo, which was surrounded by delphinium perennials. I remember having seen a hummingbird investigate these flowers one summer.

I was born in February of 1953, approximately one half to one year before electric power was installed at our farm. My younger sisters, Kathy and Betty, arrived in 1955 and 1960.

My older siblings, as well as myself, started our school years in Alcomdale. In September of 1961, Linda, Kathy and I relocated to St. Charles School in Mearns.

Because our farm was located close to Alcomdale and Mearns, we had exposure to both communities; Alcomdale for initial schooling years, mail delivery and use of the general stores, and Mearns for Sunday Mass, and in later years, St. Charles School.

Several vivid memories come to me while looking back at our time on the farm. One in particular was captivating. The west portion, our northern quarter section, was heavily-treed. Next to these trees was a small clearing with a very old but

still intact building, as well as some building ruins, which probably had beginnings in the homestead days. One warm spring or summer weekend, my dad drove us to the north quarter. He had us wait outside the old building. Moments later he emerged carrying this huge owl, which was evidently using that building to sleep in during the day, as they are nocturnal creatures. Four decades later I can still see those huge eyes starring back at me.

Another event that comes to mind is when we would anticipate picking wild mushrooms after rainy weather. I could hardly wait to go out and find the biggest pink-gill. After all, the bigger the mushrooms, the more sauce we got to enjoy. Again, I can vividly recall the taste of fresh creamy mushroom sauce over toast.

We had a large ravine with one particularly good toboggan hill. Every winter we had enough snow to have great fun and excitement on the hill. In that same ravine, situated close to the wetland, was a huge, elongated and mostly buried rock, which to us kids resembled the top of a grave. I chuckle now, recalling how my older siblings repeatedly declared that this was the grave of a native person. Years later, I concluded that this must have been a glacial erratic redeposited hundreds of miles south due to the last ice age.

We spent hours of fun in the playhouse my brother built for us, a deluxe model with two and sometimes three rooms, four windows, a custom made door and shingles on the roof.



In May of 1997 the family gathered for Mary Warshawski's 80th birthday. Gathered around her are her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren

In the mid to late 1960's my father's worsening hip problems prompted my parents to scale back farming operations and later to put their farm up for sale. For those of us still remaining on the farm these times were particularly difficult.

Eventually, the present Hutterite Colony purchased our farm, as well as neighbouring land. The rest is history. My younger siblings can still remember that very sad and cold January day when we had to say good-bye to the only home we had ever known. We relocated to St. Albert so that Kathy and I could continue attending our same high school.

Mary Anne married Jim Pollock in 1964. At present, they reside in Airdrie and are building a retirement home at Glennifer Lake, which is situated on the Red Deer River. They have two daughters and three grand children. Their son Tim passed away in 1991.

John has three children and one grandchild. He resides and works in Sylvan Lake.

Linda married Allan Webb. They reside in St. Albert and have four children and one grandchild at present.

I, Rose, married Dennis Robertson. We live in Calgary and have one son.

Kathy married Doug Hargreaves. They reside at their acreage near Stony Plain. Doug has four children.

Betty married Milton Black in 1988. Tragically, Milton died only months later due to undiagnosed health issues. Betty lives and works in Edmonton.

My dad, Walter, passed away in 1978. My mother, Mary, resides at North Ridge Lodge in St. Albert, and is 90 years young.

Country living in the Mearns area has shaped all of our lives in both subtle and profound ways, and in some ways, continues to do so. I look back with many good memories of time spent in this very special area.

Whitson, Leonard & Joyce (Gill)

By the family

Leonard was born July 22, 1925. He was the sixth child of Stanley and Mabel Whitson: Don, Dick, Douglas, Charles, Ilene, Leonard, Joyce. The family was living in the Partridge Hills area of Fort Saskatchewan when Stanley decided he needed more land to raise his growing family. During the spring and summer of 1925, after looking at different properties, they decided to buy three quarters of mostly bush land near Independence.

This land was first surveyed by George A Simpson in 1880 and was set aside as Indian



Whitson Family, 1933. Back row: Tim, Dick, Ilene and Don. Front row: Stanley, Charles, Joyce, Leonard and Mabel

Reserve #134 in 1889. The northern and eastern portions, a strip two miles wide and six miles long, was surrendered in 1905 and sold to new settlers. John Bailey sold the land to Stanley Whitson for \$27 an acre and a mortgage of \$7,000.

The main building site was on NW 26-56-27-W4th. It consisted of a log house built in 1917 lined with fir tongue and groove boards, two barns, a chicken house, a pig house and a granary. There was also a building site on the NE quarter that had a house, a horse barn and a cow barn. The Jim Sutton family lived at that site at various times. There was an Emerson tractor that came with the property. Dick ran it during that first summer of 1925. A rod went out and it was never repaired. It sat in the lane north of the main yard until the wartime scrap drive in the early 1940's.

Bamill School was across the road to the west of the SW quarter. The view across from Bamill School in 1925 was brush and more brush. Stanley went to the reserve and gave an 80-acre clearing contract to one of the natives who in turn subcontracted to all his friends. They moved en masse to the project site. "Tents and wickiups sprang up like mushrooms, and smoke from the cooking fires turned the sun to blood" writes Ken Sutton in his memories of the Whitson family. "In a few years this quarter showed a view of moving grain from fence line to fence line".

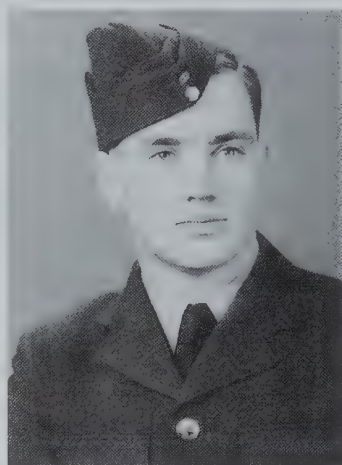
As times improved the family dreamed of a new house. In 1934 a strong windstorm shifted the two-story log house and plans for a new home were hastened and changed. The family moved to the Durham place (which they were renting at the time) about a mile north. The original basement of the old house was enlarged and the new house built on the same site in 1936. Much of the lumber from the old log house was reused in the new one. This house is still standing today.

Leonard started attending Bamill School in 1931 and went there for eight years. His first teacher was Ross Bacon and he was the only student in that grade that year. The next year Jack Ducarme joined him. They both skipped grades three and four. Lloyd Keene then joined them and the three of them finished grade nine together. His grade ten was taken at Busby Church, which was converted to a high school during the week.

As kids, swimming was quite the pastime. The creek that ran through the SW quarter had two passable swimming holes. The one nearest the school was narrow and muddy so the one further east was used by the kids. They used to make runs and separate change rooms in the tall grain. During those growing years in the 1930's the Whitson holidays to Alberta Beach were a highlight. They would load the Bennett buggy with wood to take with them. A four-wheeled trailer was loaded with wood, groceries and suitcases and the rest of the family piled into the Model A Ford.

During this time the Gill family began to mix with the Whitsons' church group and Leonard became aware of Joyce. Joyce claims she never noticed him until he started school in Belle Valley where he took grade 11 and two years of grade 12. Their first date was to a card party at the school during that last year of Grade 12. Leonard enlisted in the RCAF in April 1944. He received basic training in Edmonton and then was posted to Lethbridge for tarmac duty. By then the war in Europe was slowing down and flight training was at a standstill. He was discharged late that fall in Calgary and returned to the farm.

Joyce Gill was born July 7, 1927. Her parents were Arthur and Jessie Gill. Joyce and her brother Bruce were both born in Winterburn. The family moved to Namao later that year so this is where Joyce's first memories begin. A sister, Mavis, was born in 1929 and then baby Barbara arrived some years later in 1941. Farming in the Namao area wasn't a profitable



Leonard Whitson RCAF – 1944

venture as her parents recalled being frozen out three years and hauled out three years. In 1933, after those six years, they relocated to a farm directly east of the village of Riviere Qui Barre. Their home was the Shamrock Hotel, which had been built during

the Gold Rush days. Although their mother despaired over making a home of this barn-like building, Joyce and Mavis were elated as they had the “biggest playhouse in town”! There were 33 rooms in the place and the top two floors were theirs to do with what they pleased, within reason.

The Gill children attended Camilla School. It was here that, for the first time, Joyce realized that there was more than one religion. Namao had one school and one church so the question had never arisen before. At Camilla Joyce was asked her name and her religion in that order. Her name she knew, but she had to confess that she would have to ask her parents if she was Catholic or Protestant. Her brother, Bruce, had no such qualms when he was asked the same question. He replied in no uncertain terms that “he was neither, he was Scotch like his father”. The teacher in this one room school was Mr. Albert Cyre. He married and he and his new wife came to live in a suite of rooms that their mother had fixed up on the second floor of the hotel. Joyce and Mavis were downhearted to see their playhouse invaded by none other than their teacher.

The graveyard was right next-door and the children had to walk through it to deliver milk to the parish priest, Father McIntyre. They also had a path beside it to get to the blacksmith, Myles Kerr. During the day these walks were no problem, but after dark the fear of ghosts was ever with them! The Gills were avid card players and the children were always happy to go to the home of Myles Kerr who always made fudge and candy to keep them busy while the adults played cards.

Three years of the Riviere Qui Barre “gumbo” and the Gill family were on the move again. This time three miles south of Alcomdale to the James Stevens farm. Joyce was in grade four and her new school was Belle Valley, a mile and a half away. Her teacher was Miss Alma Steffes and Joyce distinctly recalls being placed in a room of all boys: Jim Falls, Mike O'Neill and Roy Como. High school was partially gained at Belle Valley as well. Elsie Oleckow came to live with the Gills during the week so she could go to school. Jackie Duarme, Nellie Spraaakman, Isobel Cameron, Leonard Whitson and Bill Sim all became part of the high school crowd. In summer they rode bike and in winter, horses. These were the mode of travel for softball practice at Alcomdale as well. Joyce usually played second base. Her teammates included Vera Keene, Joyce Whitson, Rosemary Morin, Jean Mitchell, Elsie Oleckow, Helen McNeill, Mollie and Elizabeth Byers, Genevieve Spargo, and Ruth and Ardyce Pettibone.

Leonard remembers giving Joyce a ride on his

bicycle when she was in grade nine and Joyce recalls that they were in a play together called "Sunday Costs Five Pesos". He was the hero that Rita Gibeau and she fought over. Joyce emerged the victor but was very embarrassed by the teasing that occurred after. They were the only couple to eventually marry of all the Belle Valley romances. Joyce lived with relatives in Edmonton so she could attend Westglen School for grade 12. She then worked in the Royal Bank of Canada, Main Branch until she married Leonard.



Leonard Whitson and Joyce Gill on their wedding day – Jan. 16, 1947

Their wedding took place in the evening of January 16, 1947. It was a stormy evening that prevented many from coming to the wedding and others from getting home. As the war had recently ended it was a time of shortages. Joyce longed for the traditional white gown and veil but they were rare. You put your name in at the store and when a dress your size came in, if your name was at the top, you were notified. She was fortunate and thus had a satin dress for her big day.

Leonard built a three-room home for them on the farm. They had five children. Brian was born in 1948, Marilyn 1950, Linda 1951, Terry 1955 and Philip 1957.



Whitson Family Picture. Front row L to R: Philip, Linda, Terry, Marilyn and Brian. Leonard and Joyce in the back

Brian married Sylvia Gibbs in December 1975. They have two children, Matthew and Lindsey and live in Medicine Hat. Lindsey married Cyrus Panjvani, July 23, 2005.

Marilyn married Terry Baker in 1968 and lives in High River. They have two daughters, Cheryl and Shauna. Cheryl married Kevin Fawcett, September 18, 1993 and has two children, Cole and Sarah. Shauna married Mike Rowell, September 22, 1996, and has a son Chris.

Linda and Ian West were married in April 1976 and now live in the Westlock area. They have three sons, Greg and wife Elaine (Wong) married June 12, 2004, Jeremy and wife Crystal (Fyn) married August 14, 2004, and Jonathan.

Terry married Arlene Vranas in June 1980. They have three children, Tim, Jennifer and Steven. Tim married Ellen Beniston September 17, 2005. Terry and Arlene live on the home quarter and farm. Tim and his new wife Ellen are living in, and renovating, the old farmhouse that Stanley built and Leonard and Joyce lived in for about 41 years.

Philip married Lila Pipke in November 1976 and lives on the SW quarter. They have three sons: Clinton (married Jacqueline Roseberg on August 20, 2005), Layne and Connor.

Leonard and Joyce have both been very active in the communities of Independence and Alcomdale. In the first years after their marriage Joyce joined the Independence Women's Institute. Later she was leader of the Merry Maids, which was a W.I. girls club started by Mrs. MacDonald. She also took part in many three-act plays.

4-H played a big part in their lives during the

years that their family was growing up. Leonard was a leader in the beef club for many years. All five children were members of the beef club and Brian had the thrill of winning the Grand Champion in Edmonton in 1962. He received \$.75/lb for a 990 pound steer! Joyce was a leader in the Clothing Club for a long time. Many of the local young girls were fortunate to learn from her, as she was an accomplished seamstress. Joyce was instrumental in setting up the Alcomdale Library and worked in the office at Alcomdale School for several years. Leonard was the secretary for the Rural Electrical Association for many years as well. They were also very active members of the Independence United Church.



Brian and his winning 4-H Calf. Grand Champion in Edmonton show

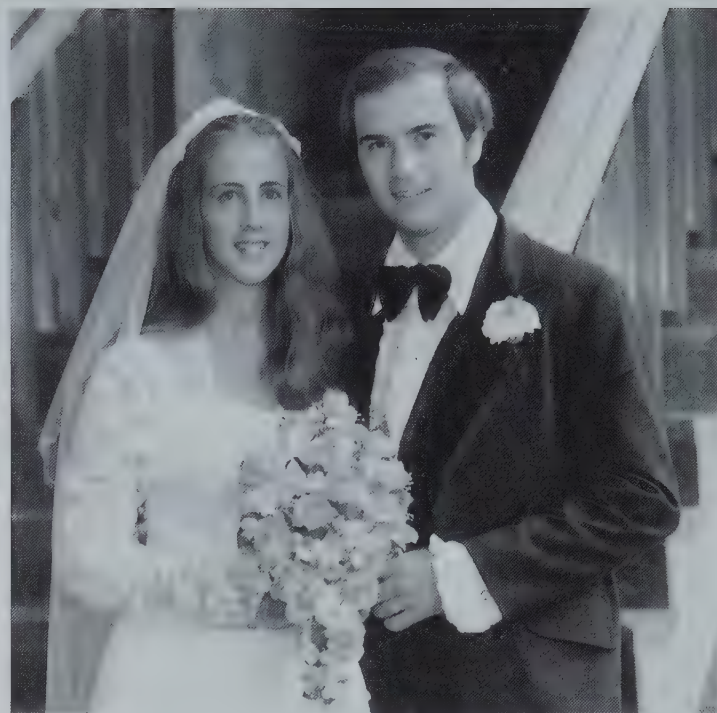
As their family grew they found that their little house was becoming too crowded. In the summer of 1952 they jacked up the house and put a cement foundation under it. They also added a 12-foot addition for two more rooms. They moved into the "big house up the hill" after Grandma Mabel Whitson's death in 1961. Joyce's mother, Jessie lived in the little house for a time. In 1980 Terry and Arlene built their home where that house had been. Leonard and Joyce moved to Smithfield Lodge in Westlock in November 2003. They are now enjoying a quieter lifestyle. Tim moved into his grandparents' home on January 1, 2005.

Ken Sutton, a long time neighbor of the Whitsons said "If every family in every community had contributed to community life as well as the Whitsons, we'd all be in a better world today".

Whitson, Terry & Arlene (Vranas)

By Terry & Arlene Whitson

Terry John Whitson was born October 16, 1955. He was the fourth child born to Leonard and Joyce



Terry and Arlene Whitson, June 28, 1980

Whitson: Brian, Marilyn, Linda, Terry and Philip. His mother remembers him to be a difficult baby and for a few years he was known as "Terrible Terry". She recalls being asked to have him in the local church pageant that first Christmas and being reluctant to agree as his vocal chords were in fine form and she was sure he would use them. When she agreed he amazed her by being a perfect angel, at least for that hour.

Some of Terry's earliest memories include sleeping in a crowded but happy little house, visiting Grandpa and Grandma Whitson whose house was in the same yard and smelled of peppermints and cigars. He also recalls Grandma Gill's turkeys and Grandpa Gill's pipe. There are pleasant memories of Sunday trips to visit friends and relatives at Calling Lake and Sandy Beach. The entire family made one trip to Drumheller. Without seat belts it was a trial to keep five kids quiet and in one place. Later, after Brian, Marilyn and Linda left home, there were more frequent trips to Saskatchewan and the Okanogan for fresh fruit with Terry and Phil traveling in the homemade camper. The boys soon learned to limit themselves with the cherries.

The family attended the Independence United Church every Sunday. Terry's first six years of school were at Alcomdale. He was always in a split classroom. There was always something happening whether it was the Christmas pageant, skating, curling or track meet. Alcomdale was much bigger at that time with two stores, a machinery agent, two grain elevators, a pool hall, curling rink, community hall and baseball diamond.

Alcomdale School closed its doors in 1968. In

September of that year the students were bussed to Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre. This meant a longer bus ride and bigger classes. Terry was in grade seven now and the bigger school meant two classrooms of each grade. By now he was involved in the Alcomdale 4-H Beef Club with the rest of his family. With the money that he made from the sale of his steer each year came an assortment of motorbikes and newfound freedom.

Terry went to Paul Kane High School in St. Albert. This meant an even longer bus ride with much bigger classes. New friends were made but there was still a group of Alcomdale kids who hung together on weekends. They included Dwayne and Brian Stewart, Betty Spargo, Brenda Tomten and Ann Arlow. Weekends were spent driving, dancing, more driving, skidooring, more driving and maybe a drive-in movie. In the summer of his grade 11, Terry went with a group of students from Paul Kane and St. Albert High on an exchange to Cornerbrook, Newfoundland. During the summer after graduation he and Ted Slecza worked pumping gas at Lake Louise.

In the fall of 1973 Terry attended NAIT taking Electronics Technology, which had been a lifelong interest that started with amateur radio. In November 1976 he left for Australia. The International Agricultural Exchange Association arranged a working holiday for six months on a sheep station in Tasmania. When he returned he had decided that he wanted to farm with his dad. They rented more land and bought more machinery. During those times when farm work slowed down a bit Terry worked in Edmonton. It was at this time that he met Arlene Vranas and they began dating.

Arlene Louise Vranas was born June 11, 1956. Her parents, Christopher and Florence (Kieser) had three children: Laurel, Arlene and Ryan. Arlene grew up on a farm in Cardiff. Her parents rented the land from the Levi Parker estate, owner of the Parker Coal mine. Arlene grew up loving the farm and the outdoors. She inherited a love of gardening from her mother and grandmother Laura Kieser. She remembers her and her sister going for long adventurous walks on the land that was riddled with old mining shafts and sinkholes. Tobogganing in the Cardiff hills was a thrilling and often dangerous pastime. The girls took various dancing and skating lessons in Morinville.

The house they lived in had originally been the office for the Parker mine so it was quite old and was occupied, in the summertime, by a multitude of bats. These could easily be seen coming and going from a crack behind the chimney. Florence had read that a Professor at the U of A was looking for bats as she was doing a research project. When contacted she

eagerly came out and she, with Arlene's help, set out nets and caught more than fifty bats in a short amount of time. She was quite impressed with Arlene and, although she was only 12, Arlene was asked to care for the bats during the summer months.

The bats arrived in plastic cages with mesh tops (about two or three to a cage) and were housed in a cleaned out granary. It was Arlene's job to keep them clean and watered and fed. Raw hamburger and live mealworms were supplied for food. Each bat had to be held in a well-gloved hand and fed with tweezers. This was quite a job on warm days, but on cooler days it was much more difficult as the bats would become dormant when their body temperature cooled and they had to be warmed up to get them to eat. When it became really wet and cold the cages were moved into a room in the house. Thank goodness they only had to be fed every second day as there were over 100 of them. Arlene received a whopping sum of \$140 for the entire summer's work. She invested this into buying a horse that she had always longed for.



The Whitson Family – Tim, Terry, Jennifer, Arlene and Steven at Steven's Graduation – 2002

Arlene went to Cunningham School for her first eight years. This school was located in Morinville but belonged to Sturgeon School Division so only country kids attended it. There were a total of about 60 students in the entire school. It was renovated and is still the SSD Central Office. Grade nine meant a long bus ride in to Mission Park School in St. Albert, and then on to St. Albert High School for grades 10-12. Arlene graduated in 1974 and attended NAIT that fall taking Medical Laboratory Technology. She spent her training year at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton and then continued working there in the Automated Biochemistry Department.

Terry and Arlene met at a Halloween party in 1978 and began dating soon after. They were

married on June 28, 1980 in St. Jean Baptiste Catholic Church in Morinville where Arlene's parents and both sets of grandparents had also been married. They had begun building their new home on the Whitson home quarter (NW 26-56-27-W4th) in May of that year.

W Diamond Farm is a mixed grain and beef cow-calf operation. Terry also worked for Commonwealth Seager, an oilfield company, maintaining the electronic equipment for several years. He then began working for CBC Radio as an electronic technician (1989 to present). Arlene gave up her job at the Royal Alex in October 1981 to have their first child, Timothy, who arrived on October 6, 1981. Jennifer was born January 26, 1983, followed by Steven, August 8, 1984.

In 1991 Arlene began working as a Teacher Assistant at Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre where she is currently employed. Tim, Jennifer and Steven all attended school at Camilla, which was the same school their father and their Grandma Whitson had gone to in times past. All three took their grades 10-12 at Sturgeon Composite High. They each made a trip to Europe during those years. Tim went to Italy, France and Spain, Steve went to Italy and Greece and Jen went to Germany on a Rotary Club exchange.

Tim graduated in 1999, enrolled in Geomatic Engineering Technology at NAIT, and started working for Focus in 2001. He is now employed with ATCO. He lived in Morinville where he and his cousin bought a house in 2002. On January 1, 2005 Tim moved back to the family farm. He married Ellen Beniston from Morinville on September 17, 2005. They are now in the process of renovating his grandparents' house and eventually plan to build a house of their own.

Jennifer graduated from High School in 2000, attended the University of Alberta and received a degree in Criminology in 2004. She is now studying for her Masters in Sociology specializing in Crime. She has worked part time with AMA for five years. Jen also worked as a teacher assistant at the U of A. Her volunteer work includes mentoring at the Edmonton Institution for Women. Jen bought a condo in east Edmonton, which she now shares with her brother Steven.

Steven graduated in 2002 and has completed his third year of Mechanical Engineering at the U of A. He is currently working with ATCO and will return to school in January 2005 to obtain his engineering degree.

All three children were baptized in St. Jean Baptiste Parish in Morinville. The family became members of the St. Charles Parish when the children began catechism classes in Mearns. All three

children were altar servers and Jennifer was a liturgy reader. They received the sacraments of First Communion, Reconciliation and Confirmation when Father Zynel was the parish priest.

Arlene was a member of the Parish Council during those years and also was a Catechism instructor while the kids were involved. In 2000 she again joined council as the vice chairperson and then sat as chairperson for two years. This was quite an exciting time for the parish as the major project of re-siding and insulating the church was completed during this time. The project was completed in June 2002. Terry has been a maintenance rep on Parish Council since 2000. He was involved with the re-siding and insulating project in 2002 and also the painting and renovating of the church interior for the 75th Anniversary in June 2005.

The family has some fond memories of special occasions in the church. At one particular Christmas celebration Steven, who was quite young at the time, scampered up to the choir loft after mass as friends were standing and visiting in the back of the church. He leaned against one of the large potted ferns and it went crashing down, just missing the people below! Boys dominated Steven's First Communion group with only two girls. Father Zynel suggested that, due to the lack of girls, perhaps one of the boys would like to join the priesthood and Steven promptly raised his hand to volunteer. He has changed his mind since.

The kids have fond memories of growing up on the farm. Their Grandma Joyce's gingersnap cookies and the hand knit sweaters she made for each of them; also Christmas dinners with all the relatives coming to the farm, and the Whitson family reunions every June. All three were 4-H Beef Club members and all were players on Alcomdale Soccer Teams. Steve also played baseball for a while.

Arlene played on the Alcomdale Women's Fastball Team for several years. Both Terry and Arlene have belonged to the Alcomdale Community League since they were married. Arlene is currently the chairperson. She has also sat on the Sturgeon County Community Services Advisory Board for the past 13 years. Tim and Ellen have now joined the Alcomdale Community League so they are the fourth generation of Whitsons doing community work in the area.

Williams-Buss, Verda

By Verda (Williams) Buss

My grandparents were Edward and Sarah Williams of Riviere Qui Barre. I am the daughter of

Edward Williams, whose sister was Annie, wife of Mike Wills. I went to Mearns at an early age to live with Aunt Annie Wills who was well known for her care giving to many children. I attended grade one at Belle Valley and then went on to St. Charles in Mearns. High school was taken at Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre.

I met James Buss of Seattle, Washington while we were both working in Vancouver. Jim and I married in 1958 and moved to Seattle to live. We raised three children in Washington. Yvonne Marie was born in 1963, Michael Edward was born in 1964 and Valerie Ann in 1967.

Jim and I retired in 1998 in the mountain area west of the small town of Naches in eastern Washington.

Wills, Mike and Annie

From RQB history book '*Wheels of Time*'

In the spring of 1901, Willie Wills loaded his horses and machinery on a boxcar along with tools and household articles and headed for Riviere Qui Barre from Wisconsin. The family consisted of his wife Jenny, her son Tom Walsh, and Willie's sons Michael, a young man of twenty two and Richard, a boy of fourteen.



Mike and Annie Wills with son Michael

Michael Wills married Annie Williams, daughter of Ed and Sarah Williams of Riviere Qui Barre. The Williams lived one half mile east of the Wills' home place.

Annie was a generous and loving lady who opened her home to many foster children. In 1978 she was awarded a Certificate of Merit by Alberta Social Services and the Foster Parents Association



Mrs. Annie Wills receives her foster parent citation award in 1977

in recognition of 35 years of understanding and devotion to children in care. No award was ever better deserved. Over the years, Annie raised one son of her own, Michael and an adopted daughter, Marlene while caring for ten foster children. Her niece, Verda Williams also stayed with Mike and Annie for a while and attended school in Mearns.

The foster children who attended St. Charles School while living with the Wills' were Monty Junck, Jean Dumont, Mona Chalifoux, Bert Zalischuk, and Gail Devlin.

Michael and his wife, Anne, have a daughter, Rachel, and a son, Sean. Marlene's daughter, Michelle, lived with her grandmother, Annie, in Riviere Qui Barre after Mike, Sr. died. Annie eventually moved to St. Albert and lived there until her death.

Wulff, Albert & Blanche (Halle)

By Ernie Wulff

Albert was born August 24, 1916 son of Nicolas and Hulda (Makus) Wulff. Hulda, Albert's mother, was born in 1882 at Zhitomir, Russia and died in 1953 in Morinville. Balthasor (Walter) Brenhofer, born in 1856, was Hulda's first husband. They were married in 1899 and Walter died in 1910. Albert's Dad, Nicholas Wulff, was born in 1878 in Winsonin, USA. He married Hulda (Makus) in 1915 and died in 1929 from a farming accident.

Blanche was born October 10, 1915 daughter of George and Lea (Carrier) Hallé. George was born in 1886 and died in 1934. Lea was born in 1884 and died in 1955.

Certificate of Baptism

Diocese of Ray St. Albert
 Child's Name Albert Howard Wulff
 Date of Birth 24th August 1916
 Date of Baptism 11th Sep. 1916
 Parents' Name Nick + Hulda Wulff
 Quality, Trade or Profession Farmers
 Abode Ray St. Albert P. C.
 Sponsors Louis + Martha Kielhaber
 Officiating Minister Rev. James Kelly

I Certify that the above particulars are truly extracted from the
 Register of Baptisms kept in Ray
 Witness my hand this 11th day of Sep. 1916
at Ray
Rev. James Kelly

Albert Wulff's Baptismal certificate, August 24, 1916

Albert and Blanche were married on May 7, 1940. They had one son Ernest Albert. In 1941 Albert and Blanche took over running the family farm. It was the horse and buggy days, so they travelled with horse and sleigh or buggy to play cards and visit with friends and neighbours, and of course Ernie tagged along (the good old days). In 1942 Albert was hired as lineman and later Joe Sheehan was hired as a helper for Morinville Mutual Telephone Company. The two men were employed there until 1965 when AGT (Alberta Government Telephone) was formed and took over the lines (now Telus).

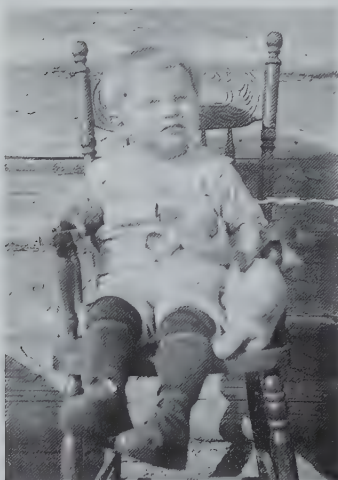
Albert and Blanche continued to farm and spent

many Saturdays at the Edmonton Public Market selling farm fresh chickens, turkeys, eggs, and geese. Friday was plucking and egg washing day, (no ands, ifs or buts).

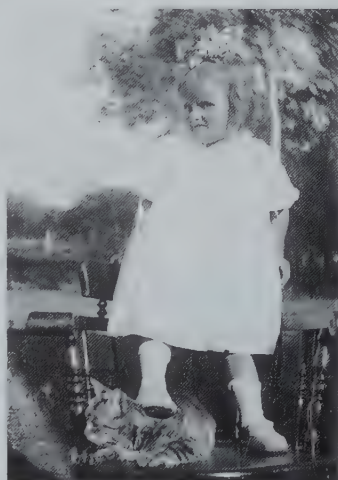
Albert continued farming and started doing carpentry work for UFA (United Farmers of Alberta), with Vic Henna as a partner, building granaries and barns for farmers in Barrhead and east and south of Edmonton and around Devon and Wabamun, Alberta. When Albert got tired of travelling he applied for work and was hired as foreman by Alldritt Homes to build homes and apartments in 1967.



Albert & Blanche (Hallé) Wulff, married May 1940



Albert Wulff in 1918



Blanche Hallé in 1917

Albert and Blanche then moved in 1972 to south Edmonton renting an apartment. Blanche soon found she had too much idle time on her hands and was pleased when the apartment owner approached them with an offer to caretake where they were staying. They stayed there for three years and moved to the north side continuing to caretake for a three-story building with 24 apartments. Albert and Blanche were very well liked as caretakers. Albert continued working for Alldritt Homes until 1984 when he retired. He was a man who was always busy and he soon wanted to work again. Albert applied and was hired by White Trucks doing

maintenance until 1986 when he gave that up. Then he applied and was hired by Alberta Parks and Recreation cutting planks for park benches and picnic tables. Eventually he quit doing that too.

Albert and Blanche moved back to Morinville in 1991 to an apartment and from there he travelled six miles to the farm where he enjoyed building beautiful cedar chests and spoon racks which they sold at Farmers Markets. Albert always enjoyed working with wood and was always inventing little humorous knickknacks to share with his many friends and family. Blanche did the finishing touches like painting, staining and varnishing all of the projects Albert made.

They both worked hard and played hard through the many years of their life. They did a lot of fishing, which was Albert's favorite winter and summer sport but OH!... the big one always got away. They always loved to take the grandchildren fishing and camping and on trips. They loved going on holidays with family and friends until Albert got sick and passed away on August 15, 1995 in Westlock, Alberta.

Blanche moved December 12, 1997 to Heritage Lodge in Morinville where she still plays cards,

bingo and does find-a-word-search books and also visits the farm when picked up by family members.

Diary of Blanche and Albert Wulff 1945, 1946 and 1947

July 12, 1945	Taxes on two quarters of land \$170.43
November 13, 1945	Dr. Geo Whissell bill for Blanche's broken leg; cast \$44.50, x-ray \$5.00 and drugs \$.50 cents
June 24, 1946	Taxes on two quarters of land \$199.43
July 21, 22, 1946	Frost
August 15, 1946	Snow in Calgary
August 15, 1946	Frost
September 21, 1946	Snow
September 22, 1946	picked potatoes
October 3, 4, 5, 1946	Threshed grain with crew
November 13, 1946	Snow stayed
December 15, 1946	Bought little chicks 1½ cents each
Feb.1, 1947	48 below zero
February 2, 1947	Bought 300 New Hampshire chicks for 5 cents each
Mar. 24, 1947	Geese started laying

PHONE 23

Westlock, Alta Nov 13 1945

Mr. Albert Wulff.

Morinville.

IN ACCOUNT
WITH

DR. GEO. WHISSELL

PHYSICIAN AND SURGEON

OFFICE: MAIN STREET

For Professional Services

March 31/45.	Fracture.	\$ 50.00
May 4/45.	On account.	\$ 10.00
May 11/45.	drugs.	.50
May 25/45.	X-Ray.	5.00
June 25/45.	On account.	\$ 10.00
	Balance	\$ 35.50

Please remit
R.

Mar.27, 1947	Turkeys started laying
March 1947	Grade A Eggs sold for 30 cents a dozen
	Medium A – 28 cents a dozen
	Grade B – \$.04 (not washed good enough)
May 1, 1947	Started field work
May 13, 1947	Planted potatoes
May 17, 1947	Seeded oats
May 19, 1947	planted garden
May 27, 1947	seeded barley
May 29, 1947	train wreck by our house what a mess
May 22, 1947	received trees and raspberry plants
May 27, 1947	had frost
June 25, 1947	Cream sold 43lbs \$8.31 transportation -.50 = \$7.81
July 8, 1947	Sold barley \$.79½ cents a bushel
July 15, 1947	Taxes on one quarter of land \$100.91
September 22, 1947	had snow
September 26, 1947	dug potatoes
September 27, 1947	helped Jim Halle cut grain
October 1, 1947	threshed barley and oats
October 8, 9, 1947	threshed some oats and then it snowed and stayed
October 13, 1947	Sold oats 55¼ cents per bushel
October 20, 1947	Gas 22.9 cents per gallon
January 1948	Bought fertilizer 11-48-0 cost \$63.50 per ton

100 Year Reunion, Brenhofer-Wulff family

(adapted from Town and Country, Monday, Sept 23, 1991 and The Morinville Gazette, Tues, Aug 20, 1991)

A family reunion brought more than 200 Brenhofer-Wulff descendants to their 100 year old



Blanche & Albert Wulff on the occasion of their 50th Wedding Anniversary, 1990

homestead farm northwest of Morinville on the August long weekend (1991). Walter Brenhofer arrived by ox team and wagon on overland trails to take up the homestead land near Egg Lake in 1891. In July of 1894 Hulda Makus arrived in Canada from Russia settling with her parents and one brother and two sisters near Bruderheim. Walter and Hulda were married in 1899 and had five children before Walter died in 1910. The following year Hulda married Nikolas Wulff, a local mechanic and widower with one daughter. Hulda and Nikolas were blessed with five more children. For the reunion in 1991 four of the original 11 children had survived, the eldest, Mary (Brenhofer) Leduc of McLennan, Gertrude (Brenhofer) Muller, 81 years old, of Fort Saskatchewan, Albert Wulff and Elsie (Wulff) Lalonde both of Morinville. The homestead land now belongs to Ernie and Louise Wulff, son of Albert and Blanche Wulff. The old house was still standing at the time of the reunion, but was being used as a shelter for the cattle.



Albert, Ernie and Blanche Wulff, 1985

Wulff, David & Vivian (Constantin)

By David Wulff

David Wulff was born March 12, 1967 to Ernie and Louise Wulff.

I remember tearing down the old elevator in Mearns with my uncle, Art Lalonde, and my dad.

I took my schooling at Camilla in Riviere Qui Barre and finished at Sturgeon Composite High School near Namao. I worked at various little jobs while I was in school. When I finished school I

started working for Safeway in a warehouse in Edmonton. When I left Safeway I started a business hauling items for a sheriff's office for six years.

I am still self employed but have switched careers to the oil field service, inspecting drill collars for a company called Western Drill Collar Ltd., and I love what I do.

I met Vivian Constantin at a dance and we continued dating through high school. We got married on August 22, 1987 when I was 20 years old. We lived in Morinville for a few years and then purchased an acreage just 4 miles north of Morinville, where we are now living.



David and Vivian Wulff married August 22, 1987

Vivian was born on July 28, 1969 to Raymond and Lorraine (Shaub) Constantin. Vivian worked for McDonald's Consolidated from 1989 to 1994, then went to work as manager for Liquor World in Edmonton for a few years and is now working as cashier for Shell Canada in Morinville.

We have two children, Chantelle, born September 20, 1988, and Jarid, born January 2, 1993.

My grandparents, Albert & Blanche Wulff really appreciated the outdoors and because of this our

family loves camping, fishing and trail riding with quads and enjoy being with friends.

Both Chantelle and Jarid took their schooling in Morinville. Chantelle is involved in soccer, basketball, and volleyball. She loves singing and acting in school plays as well as shopping with her mom and the girls. Jarid is involved in hockey and baseball. He likes hunting, fishing and quading with his dad and friends.

Our two children love getting spoiled by their grandparents. Grandpa Wulff likes making and helping them build school projects and Grandma Wulff likes sewing and helping Chantelle with school projects and other things. And we can't forget there are always goodies at Grandma's house.



Chantelle Wulff (17 years old). Daughter of David and Vivian Wulff



Jarid Wulff (12 years old) son of David and Vivian Wulff

Wulff, Ernie & Louise (Hebert)

By Ernie Wulff

Ernest Albert was born on December 31, 1940, the son of Albert and Blanche (Halle) Wulff.

Ernie attended school starting at Tellier School, which was located three miles south east of his parents' farm. They used a horse and buggy and in winter they used a horse and sleigh to travel to school with the Muller children who lived just a little north of the Wulff farm. Raymond drove the horse because he was older. When Ernie finished grade two, he and some other children had to be bussed (Mr. Charles Montpelier was the new bus driver) to Egg Lake School for one year and then to the Mearns School until grade seven. After grade seven, Ernie and some of the other children were bussed to Cunningham School in Morinville for six months, then to Camilla School in Riviere Qui Barre.

While Ernie was in Mearns, he played baseball on the Mearns ball team coached by Mr. Eddy Vandenhouten. While attending school in Riviere

Edmonton, Alberta, *January 9* 19*41*

Mrs. Mary Wulff

In Account With
MISERICORDIA HOSPITAL
Dec 31 Jan 9

Days		Private Room, Board			
		Semi-Private Room, Board			
<i>9</i>		Public Ward Room, Board	<i>2 50</i>	<i>22 50</i>	
		Operating Room Fee <i>Per Room</i>		<i>5</i>	
		Dr.'s Aneasthetic Fee			
		X-Ray Fee			
		Laboratory Fee			
		Special Nurse Fee			
		Special Nurse's Board			
		Prescriptions		<i>1 55</i>	
		Dressings			
		Child's Care			
				<i>29 05</i>	
		Received Payment <i>By Cash</i>		<i>10</i>	
				<i>19 05</i>	
		<i>2/2 Credit</i>		<i>2 50</i>	
				<i>16 55</i>	
		<i>1941</i>			

ALL BILLS MUST BE PAID WEEKLY IN ADVANCE

Misericordia Hospital bill when Ernie was born Dec. 31, 1940

Qui Barre, Ernie was involved in curling with the school and with his dad and the Nobert brothers, George and Alphonse. Ernie was also involved in a 4-H grain club in Riviere Qui Barre and won a week's stay at the Vermillion Agriculture School.



Ernie Wulff in his "Gold Crop" 4-H oat field in 1955

Ernie left school at the age of 18 and started working in a lumber camp in the winter, north and west of Fox Creek Alberta. In the summer months Ernie worked helping his uncle, Herbert Wulff, doing carpentry work, building houses and barns for farmers in the Busby, Pickardville and Westlock areas. From 1960 to 1963 Ernie drove water truck hauling water for Cambridge oil drilling company and continued to drive water truck until 1968 when he was offered a job working in Morinville for the Alberta Department of Highways. Ernie worked there until 1971 when he transferred to Alberta Correctional Institution (the old jail) in Ft. Saskatchewan where he worked until 1979.

Ernie married Louise Hebert, daughter of Arthur and Jeanne (Desnoyers) Hebert of Morinville on November 9, 1964 in Morinville. Father Primeau did the service. Louise lived four miles east of Morinville when we married and she moved 6½ miles west of Morinville to the Wulff farm.

Louise remembers when dating Ernie and visiting his folks on Sundays, his mom would always have fresh baked cinnamon buns and matrimonial cake. Ernie's mom, Blanche, was an awesome cook!



Ernie & Louise Wulff on their wedding day, Nov. 9, 1964

Louise worked at the Scotia Bank in Edmonton after finishing high school in Morinville. When we married, Louise quit work to move where Ernie was driving truck for the oil company in Alex, Alberta until 1979 when we moved back to Morinville close to Ernie's job. We rented Edward and Anne Krywko's farmhouse 4 ½ miles east of Morinville until 1971.

Later Louise worked at the Morinville Auction

Mart and at a school in the old convent in Morinville as a teacher's aid. Louise was also a leader with the 4-H club for many years in Riviere Qui Barre.

In 1971 we bought the farmland SW 14-56-26-W4th from Ernie's dad. It's the original homestead of Ernie's great grandparents, Nicolas and Hulda (Makus) Wulff. The land was purchased by Grandma Hulda's first husband, Balthasar (Walter) Brenhofer in 1895. Walter died in 1910.

After we moved to the Wulff farm, along with all the other things, Louise was a homemaker and raised four children. She did chores; milking cows, feeding calves, pigs and chickens, when Ernie was working day shifts. In 1977, while Ernie was working in Fort Saskatchewan, he and Louise took a re-upholstery course by correspondence from Modern Upholstery Institute in Santa Ana, California, USA because there were no courses like that in Canada. They received their certificate March 26, 1980. They continued doing upholstery in their basement until the basement got too small, then they moved to a larger building on the farm and registered their business (Lou-Ern Reupholstery) with the County and Ernie quit working for someone else in 1979. Business has been great for the past 29 years.

Ernie and Louise have four children who are all married.

- Jeannine (Kendal Krywko) has six children: Ashley, Mathew, Daniel, Melissa, Katelyn, and Bradley.
- Kenneth (Kathy McCormack) has two children: Jenessa and Tara.
- David (Vivian Constantine) has two children: Chantelle and Jarid.
- And Lori (J.R. Tailleur) has one child, Andy.



Ernie & Louise Wulff, June 2004

Wulff, Herbert & Beatrice (Logan)

As told by Beatrice

Herby was the second oldest child of Nicholas and Hulda Wulff. They lived east of Mearns and Herby attended Tellier School. When he was 14 years old his father passed away and Herb was needed at home so his formal education was over.

Beatrice was the tenth child of Alfred Logan and Louise Beaudry. She was born in Alcomdale and moved to the Egg Lake area in 1927.

Herby began his career in his early teens working for the Steffes brothers in Flatbush, hauling lumber. He would return home occasionally when they needed him on the farm. In the spring of 1940 he returned to Morinville and went to work for the Meuniers. In her mid teens Beatrice went to work as a cook's helper with her brother Bert in Flatbush. Prior to this she had met Herby and after three years of courting, Beatrice and Herby were married in Edmonton in July of 1940.

Herb was still working for Meuniers and Beatrice joined him there. After that first fall they went to work with Beatrice's brother, Tom, at the coal mine. Alfred had opened up the coal mine in his younger days and it was closed until Tom and a partner reopened it in 1941.

They began their farming lives on a half section west of Alcomdale that they rented from Willis Collins. After two years they moved back to the Morinville area. Around this time Herby's mother decided to give him a quarter of land close to her farm if they would pay off the mortgage. There were only forty acres broken with no buildings so that fall they started to build a new home. They finished in the spring and moved in early in the summer of 1945. Many days were spent working until dark picking stones and roots and by 1949 all 160 acres were under cultivation. Now that the land was broken, Herby went to work for Tom Logan at the coal mine as a maintenance carpenter. He worked there for fourteen years. After leaving the mine, Herb started his own building and maintenance company. While he was busy with his building company, Beatrice was busy at home raising their four daughters, Shirley, Esther, Linda and Dianne. She also did the chores and some of the farming.

In 1965 they decided to sell the farm and move to Edmonton. Herby was working for Alldritt Homes and was travelling back and forth so it made sense to move closer to work. Eventually he went to work as a carpenter for the Edmonton Separate School Board and Edmonton Parks and Recreation. Beatrice decided that she would like to receive a pay cheque and so applied to the Edmonton Separate

School Board. She worked nine years as a custodian.

Herby was stricken with cancer and passed away at the Edmonton General Hospital July 17, 1987. He was laid to rest in the Mearns cemetery. Beatrice continues to live in her own condominium in west Edmonton. She is blessed with grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Wulff, Kenneth & Kathy (McCormack)

By Kenneth Wulff

I was born March 27, 1966, in the old St Albert hospital to Ernest and Louise Wulff. We lived about 4½ miles south east of Mearns.

I attended school at Camilla in Riviere Qui Barre and finished high school at Sturgeon Composite near Namao. I met Kathy McCormack in high school and we dated until we married on August 27, 1988.

Kathy was born October 28, 1966 in Whitehorse, Yukon to James and Eleanor McCormack. Kathy's dad, James Thomas McCormack, was born in County Louth, Ireland and her mom, Eleanor McCormack (Walker), was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Kathy and her parents moved from Whitehorse in 1967 and she went to school in Edmonton until

grade three then they moved to Gibbons. In 1975 she finished grade school in Gibbons and high school in Sturgeon Comp then went on to University and became a registered nurse.

We have two children:

- Jenessa born September 2, 1991 in St. Albert (old Hospital), and
- Tara born December 15, 1994 in St. Albert (new Hospital).

What I remember about Mearns is tearing down the elevator with my dad and uncle, Art Lalonde, and going to the parish suppers and picnics with Mom and Dad.

I started my career in 1985 working at the Morinville Seed Cleaning Plant until 1994 when I moved on to work at Alberta Wheat Pool. The job had us move from Morinville to where the office was, in Camrose. We bought a new house in Camrose and lived there from 1997 to 2000. Again the job moved to the Calgary office and we bought a new house in Calgary. We lived there until 2001 when I had to move back to the office in Camrose where we had a new house built. I am now with Agricore United as Operations Manager in Crop Production Services.

Kathy is a registered nurse and worked at St. Mary's Hospital in Camrose until we moved to Calgary. She had no trouble getting work at a hospital in Calgary for the short time we were there and now she is working back at St. Mary's Hospital in Camrose where she likes to work.

Our daughter Jenessa is going to school in Camrose and is involved in dancing with the Camrose Academy of Dancing.

Our daughter Tara is also going to school in Camrose and played hockey for two years and is now involved in dancing with her older sister. They love to visit with grandparents (getting spoiled). The grandparents are always making things for them and repairing things that need sewing.



Kenneth and Kathy Wulff married August 27, 1988



Jenessa Wulff (14 years old). Daughter of Kenneth and Kathy



Tara Wulff (11 years old). Daughter of Kenneth and Kathy

Memorabilia



"Love & Farming" – Joseph and Yvonne Tellier – 1927



Three Conservatives and One Liberal – Prime Minister Diefenbaker greets Mr. Art Soetaert (a local Mearns area farmer, Liberal MLA and Morinville Mayor), and Mr. & Mrs Joseph Tellier



Johanna Byer (Holzer) and Betty Byer (Perras) in front of their dad's 1928 Chev. – Photo taken in 1937



1948 – Rosey Van Hove with the first family car, a 1947 Kaiser



Tellier School grades one to eight. It was situated three miles west and one mile north of Morinville. A big spruce tree still stands there



Lalonde's first car, circa 1950. Marcel Lalonde is sitting on the car.



"Mearns Mashers" – June, 1984. Back row L to R: Belinda Fulton, Shirley Derrien, Myra Brenneis, Donna Sheehan, Cindy Brenneis. Middle row: Willy Sherher, Carol Kaup, Janet Scheonberger, Rose Altmiks, Shelley Porter, Rolande Fulton. Front row: Susie Kluthe, Ruby Bokenfohr, Laura Penner, Mary Giese



"Alcomdale Eh's" Ladies Fastball Team – 1991. Val, Janet Hargreaves, Ryan Fulton, Belinda Fulton, Joyce Schafers, Dianne Falls, Debbie Mitchell, Trudy Taphorn, Elaine Schafers, Cathy Soetaert, Wayne Meakin, Roly Fulton, Arlene Whitson, Linda Meakin



"Maurice's Magpies" – Sturgeon Division 5 "Festival in the Park Councillor's Challenge". L to R: Philip Whitson, Neil Brenneis, Louise Brenneis, Oliver Brenneis, Byron Fulton, Terry Whitson, Arlene Whitson, Maurice Remillard (Councillor), Ivan Spargo, Ann Fulton, Ryan Fulton, Belinda Fulton



Original Fred Nobert house as it still stands today. First built in 1905



Warszawski Barn



Henry Schafer farmhouse as it still stands today



Original barn from the Walter Nobert homestead as it stands today on the Phil Soetaert farm.



John Meyer barn and log building.



Original old barn on the Alphonse Houle farm, still standing today



Kluthe family hockey team. Winners of the RQB Family Fun Hockey Tournament – circa 2003



1950 Mearns Softball Team. Jean Lovelock, Joan Meakin, Betty Harrington, Mildred Ellett, Bernice O'Neill, Doris Hermanutz, Helen McGillis, ... Jenke, Vi Brenneis, Betty Hermanutz, Lydia Jenke



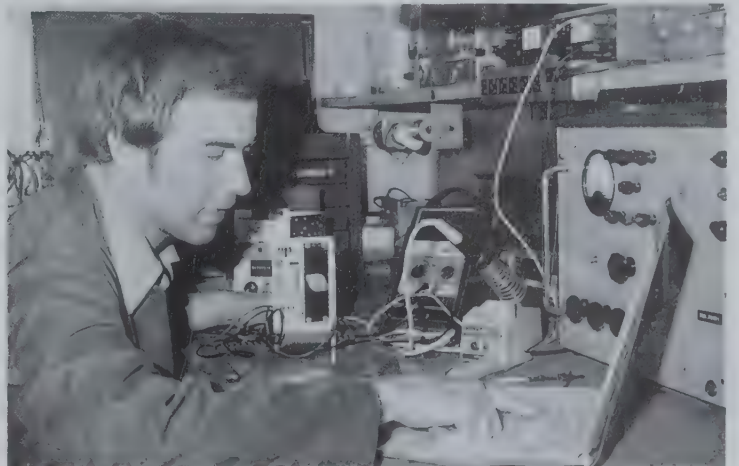
Winter sledding. L to R; Jim Ricard, Leo Pelletier (friend of Jim's), Gary Ricard (Jim's son) and Brad Kluthe



Mearns Baseball Team – 1932. Back row L to R: Father Stacey, Dan Vandel, Walter Fitzgerald, John Stevens, Alex Sangster, Robert Lirondelle. Front row: Doyle Cochlin, Alphonse Gagnon, Fred Nobert, Theodore (Chatter) Aslin, George (Lefty) Lutz. (Alex Sangster worked for Walter Nobert and George Lutz worked for J. Stevens)



Mearns Softball Team. Back row: Marge Boddez, Joyce Boddez, John Louis Sabourin, Rita Sabourin, Betty Kluthe, Johanna Kluthe, Verda Williams. Front row: Vera Brenneis, Louise Atlmiks, Evelyn Boddez, Madeline Sabourin.



Terry Whitson with his "Ham Radio"



Friedrich Farm – Threshing crew



Friedrich Farm – Throwing bundles in threshing machine



Victor and Flora's boys with their pets in front of their house



Arthur & Jessie Gill and daughter, Joyce, in front of stylish convertible "Model T?" – photo circa 1931



Logs were cut and sold for firewood – Alfons, Otto & Richard Friedrich



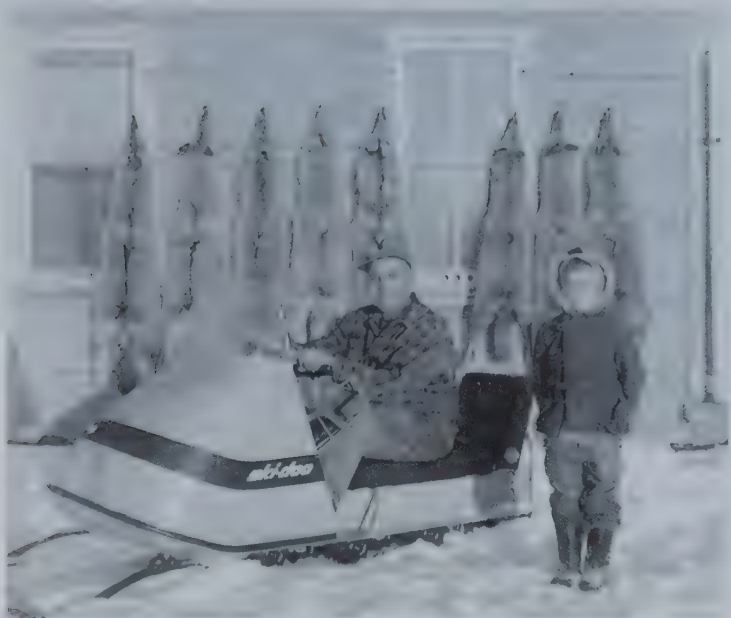
First house of Wulff family SE 14-56-26-W4. L to R: Gertrude, Mary Thersa, Anna (friend), Grandma holding Albert Wulff, Grandpa holding Herbie Wulff, a friend – Circa 1918



Horse drawn wagon. Elsie & Leo Lalonde seated in the front and Marcel & Donald Lalonde in the back.



May (Altmiks) Lamoureux, Josephine (Halle) Lirondelle and Teacher, Mrs Adeline Chatquette



Andrew Lutz and daughter, Sue, after a successful coyote hunt – 1966



George Kluthe, Johnny Altmiks, Johanna, Joe & Lucy Kluthe



"Two Good Sports" – Justine Hittinger and Bernice Johnson, our Belle Valley teachers, with Louise Ellett and Jim Ellett in a homernade boat which Jim made from a water trough



First outboard motor in the district, owned by Wilfrid and Clarice (nee Nobert) Beaupré. Fishing at Lac La Nonne with Alice and Fred Nobert – circa 1940



"Moose Hunters Issue Challenge" – 1957. Joe Hermanutz and Lawrence Kluthe bagged a huge moose, which dressed over 700 pounds and had 13-point horns, measuring a 54-inch spread. Joe and Lawrence claim top honors for the 1957 season



"Bagging a Big One" – Joe Hermanutz and George Kluthe



Blanche & Jim Halle with a wheelbarrow full of garden produce



St. Albert resident, "Uncle Springer" (white shirt in middle) harvests his field with his nephews, Fritz Altmiks, John Meyer and Joe Kluthe, in 1923



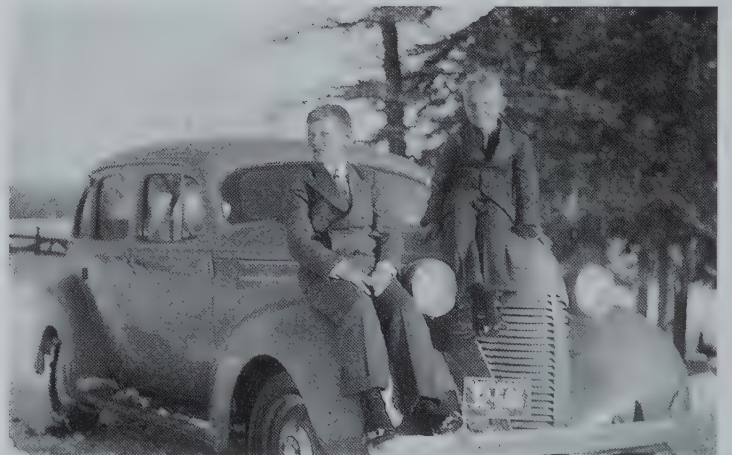
Falls Fertilizer and Cockshutt Dealership in Alcomdale.



Truck used by Herman Libke when he operated the Libke Store in Alcomdale



"Bringin' in the Sheaves". Rosie Van Hove in 1939.



Otto & Richard Friedrich sitting on their first car, a 1939 Hudson



Theodore Jacobs at Egg Lake area – circa 1907



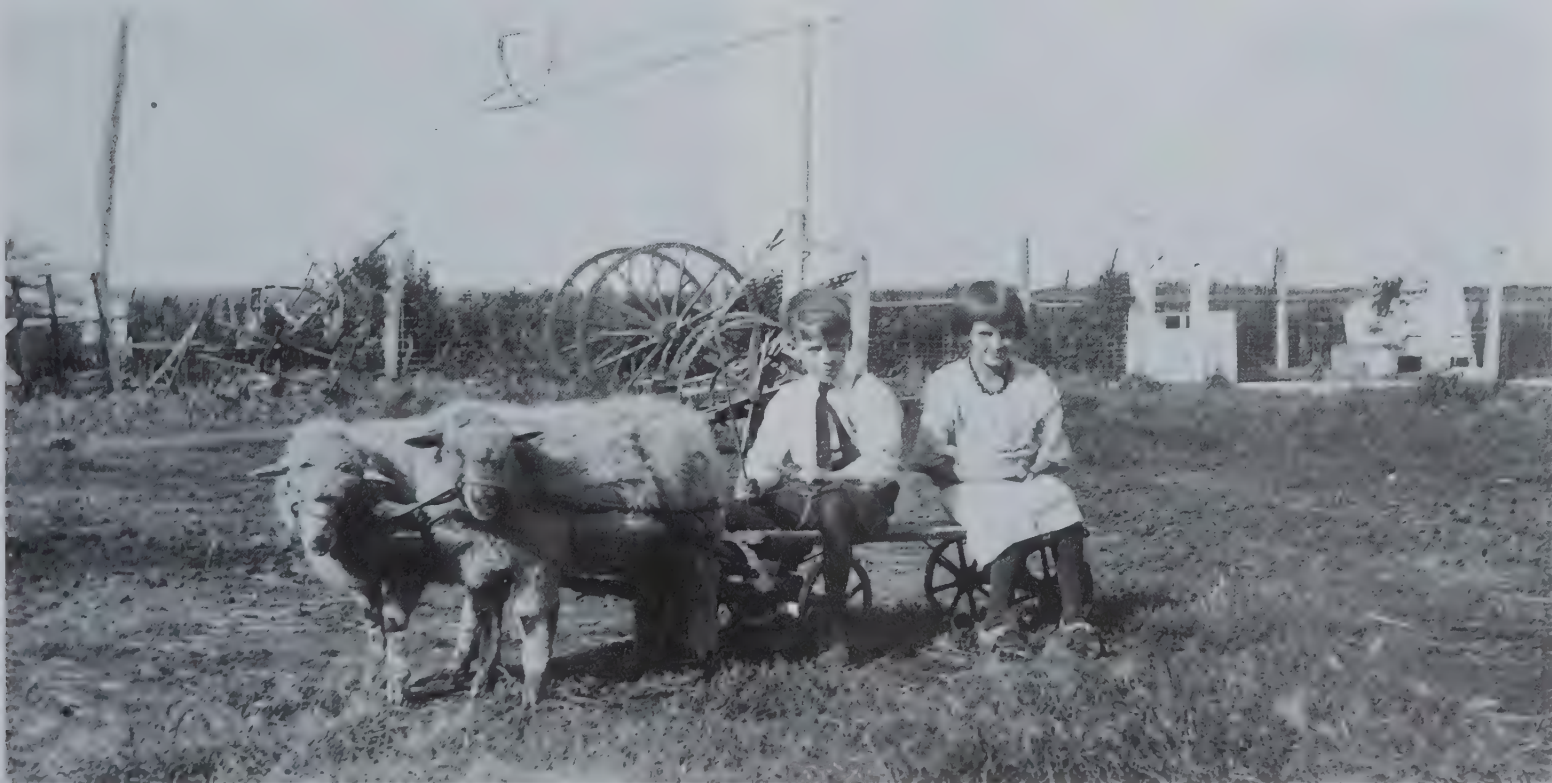
1955 – Leonard Nobert, age 12, catching a ride bringing the cows home for milking



Joe and Jim Halle with their horse & buggy – 1928



1928 – Willys Knight truck – Ross Pettibone



Jim & Blanche Halle have two sheep hitched up to pull their wagon



Jim Ellett on a 1928 Model "D" John Deere pulling a Cockshutt Grain Grinder. (The log house with lean-to-kitchen in background) – 1944 photo



Morris & Sam Logan "Picking a Tune" – circa 1930's



"Family Fishing" – Back row: John Marzoff, Dave Schlotki, Ken Young, Zeth Marzoff, Taylor Marzoff, Valerie Schlotki, Cole Young (Kluthe)



1993 – Harvesting on the Robert Kieser farm – Gordon on combine.



Butchering pigs on Morris Logan farm – 1939



Albert Wulff in front of his farm truck



Old livery stable on a stop over point on a pioneer trail that led to the Klondike Trail. It was located on the old Durand farm and demolished in 2002

TAX NOTICE, 1947
MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF MORINVILLE, No. 91
MORINVILLE, ALBERTA
J. O. Patry, Sec.-Treas.

DATE MAILED June 16th, 1947.

All taxes are due and payable one month from the date of this notice, and in the event of non-payment the amount may be levied with costs, by distraint of the goods and chattels of the person entitled to pay the same, or may be recovered by suit as a debt due to the Municipal District (M.D. Act, Sec. 310.)

MILL RATES	
Municipal	18
School	17
Hospital	
Educational	
TOTAL	35

If after the 31st day of March in any year any taxes which became due and payable in the preceding year remain unpaid, there shall be added thereto by way of a penalty 5% on the 1st day of April of that year and each succeeding year so long as the taxes remain unpaid.

To Albert Wulff
MORINVILLE
Alberta

DISCOUNTS

There shall be allowed by way of a discount 7% on or before August 31st, and 5% on or before December 15th, upon all payments made on account of taxes which became due and payable in the year in which payment is made.

PAYMENTS MUST BE MADE BY REGISTERED LETTER, MONEY-ORDER, ACCEPTED CHEQUE OR DRAFT, PAYABLE AT PAR TO THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT.

TAKE NOTICE that you have been assessed under the provisions of the Assessment Act for the undermentioned lands in the above district. Taxes are now due and payable to the Secretary-Treasurer, as follows:

Account Number	HAMLET OF				No. of Acres Assessed	ASSESSED VALUES			AMALGAMATED TAXES				Total Taxes Due	
	Pt. of Sec.	Sec. Lot	Twp Blk.	Rge. Mer. Plan		Value of Land only	Value of Bldgs. & Improve.		Current		Arrears			
1235	S.E.	14	56	26-4	154.9	3100			108.50					108.50

PLEASE RETURN OR BRING THIS NOTICE WITH REMITTANCE

E. & O. E.

MUNICIPAL SUPPLIES LTD., Calgary and Edmonton

(ALBERTA)

Dated _____

Place

Date _____

19 38

P.O.

(hereinafter called the Vendor) is hereby requested by the Undersigned

(Hereinafter called the Purchaser) to ship to

on or about the _____ day of _____, 19____ or as soon thereafter as possible the following

Purchase Price

(hereinafter called the Property)

The property is to be shipped and received subject to the following conditions, agreements and warranties and no others:

1. The purchaser hereby agrees to receive the property on arrival, to give his receipt therefor, to pay in cash the freight and charges thereon from

and to pay the Vendor for the same the sum of _____ plus finance charges shown in the schedule below on the following terms:

(a) Cash on Delivery

(b) To deliver the following second-hand machinery for credit in the amount(s) stated:

Make

Size

Machine

Amount

(c) and execute and deliver in the Vendor's form an instalment note, in favour of the Vendor for the balance

of the purchase price, namely:

plus finance charges shown in the following schedule. Each instalment shall include finance charges shown in the said schedule, shall be payable on the date shown therein and shall bear interest after due at seven per cent (7%) per annum until paid.

Maturity Date	Amount	Finance Charges	Totals	Maturity Date	Amount	Finance Charges	Totals
	Cash Deposit				1431.44		
	Balance to be paid before delivery						2885.51

Contract for purchase of combine, 1948

SCALE RECORD IN LBS.		THE CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD		AGREEMENT NUMBER 1		THE ALBERTA PACIFIC GRAIN CO. (1943) LTD.		634036	
GROSS WEIGHT	17780								
WAGON WEIGHT	6370	STATION Mearno		C.W.B. NO. 6649		DATE July 29 1951		KIND OF GRAIN Oats	
GRAIN UNLOADED	11410								
SCREENINGS ETC. CLEANED OUT		NAME OF PRODUCER (UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED BELOW) SURNAME		CHRISTIAN NAMES		FRIEDRICH R.			
GROSS WEIGHT AFTER CLEANING		PRODUCER'S PERMIT NO.		SURF.		P.O. ADDRESS (MARK "X" IF SAME AS STATION)		PROVINCE	
SHRINKAGE ALLOWANCE		168475		A.		Almondak		Alta	
GROSS WEIGHT TO ACCOUNT FOR		NET BUSHELS IN FIGURES		GRADED BY		AT A PRICE PER BUSHEL OF		THE INFORMATION HEREUNDER IS FOR RECORD PURPOSES ONLY	
BUSHELS		TENTHS		AS					
334		7		1 ft		41 3/4		137 57	
DOCKAGE		3		7		X		139	
NET WEIGHT TO ACCOUNT FOR		331		7					
NET CASH PAYABLE (IN WORDS)		ONE HUNDRED THIRTY SEVEN		NOT NEGOTIABLE		SIGNED FOR THE ABOVE COMPANY ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD		137 19	
PRODUCER'S CERTIFICATE		PRODUCER'S RECORD		CONDITIONS ON THE REVERSE SIDE ARE PART OF THIS CERTIFICATE		SIGNED FOR THE ABOVE COMPANY ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD		AGENT	

Receipt for sale of 331 bushels of oats at 41 cents per bushel. Agent was C.A. Pelletier

CUSTOMER'S COPY

M.S. 35 50M-9-41

Sold to *R. Friedrich*Address *Moinville*Date *July 30* 19*63*Sold by *M. Bugnet* Dealer

Farmer's Permit No.

Address

Dealer's
Handling License No.

DESCRIPTION	GALLONS	PRICE	AMOUNT	
<i>Esso Gasoline</i>	<i>113</i>	<i>33</i>		
<i>Esso diesel fuel purple</i>	<i>350</i>	<i>16.6</i>	<i>5.8</i>	<i>10</i>
			<i>3.7</i>	<i>30</i>
			<i>9.5</i>	<i>40</i>

"All fuel oil sold for heating purposes has been tested as provided in the regulations made under 'The Gas and Oil Burner Act' and is oil which can be and is being delivered under the provisions of those regulations."

RECEIVED PAYMENT

RECEIVED ABOVE IN GOOD ORDER

M. Bugnet
Driver

.....Purchaser

Esso gas bill, 1963 – Maurice Bugnet Esso agent, Mearns



The Consolidated Mining & Smelting Co. of Canada Limited

ELEPHANT BRAND PRODUCTS

Nº . 9746

DELIVERY OR TRANSFER SLIP

Agency *Alvordale Alta*Date *February 21* 194*5*Name of
Customer *Alvordale Alta*Address *Moinville Alta*

PLEASE PRINT

I/We have this date taken delivery of the following material
in good order from
The Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company of Canada Limited

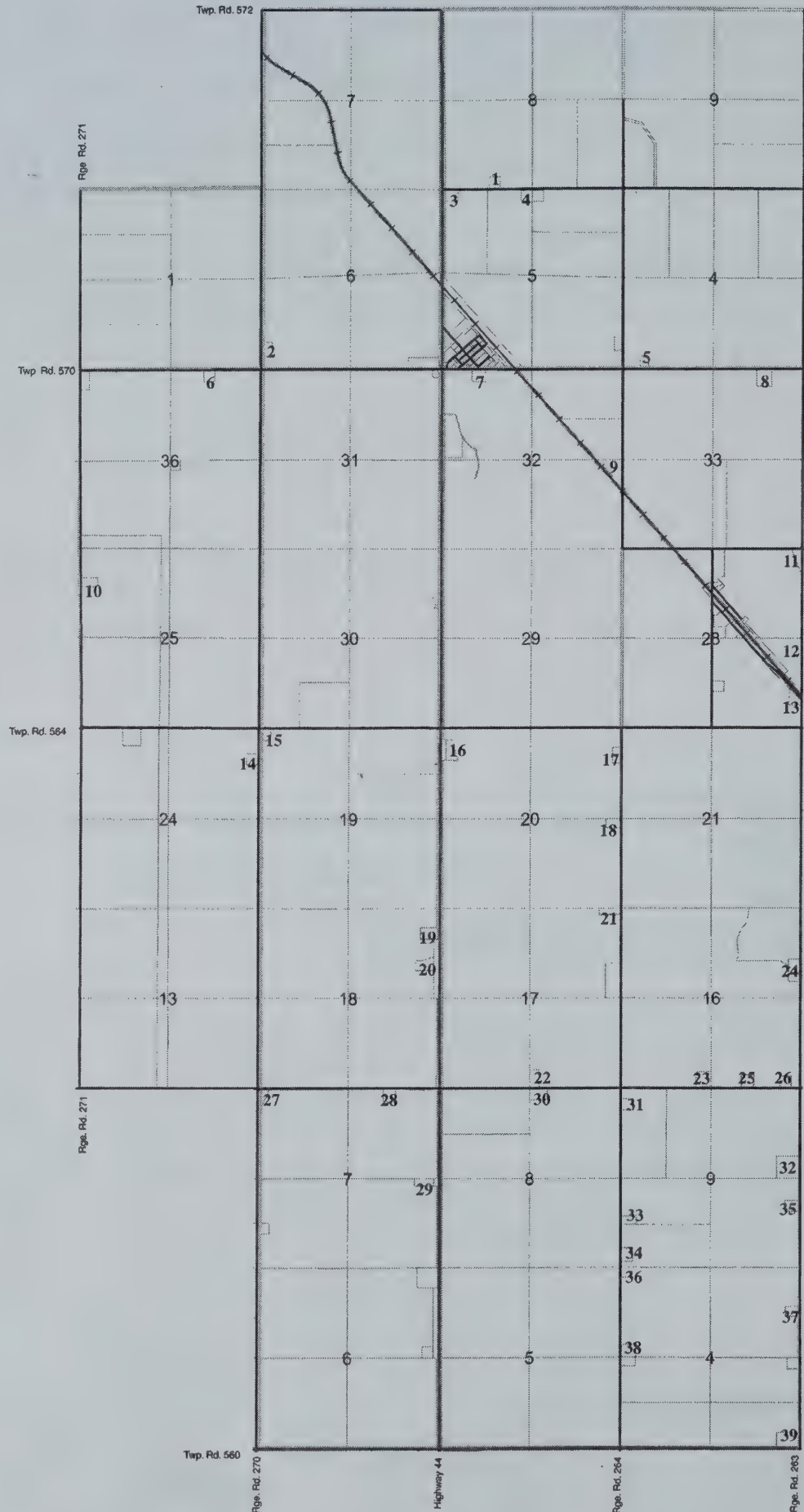
RECEIVED for transfer to the
Company, the amounts listed
below:

NUMBER OF QUANTITY (LBS.)	PRODUCT	PRICE PER TON	AMOUNT
<i>3000</i>	<i>Ammonium Phosphate 11-48-0</i>	<i>60.50</i>	<i>90.75</i>
	<i>Triple Superphosphate</i>		
	Attachment..... Run for..... Drill		
Delivered from Car ☒ Whouse ☐	<i>M. Bugnet</i> Signature of Customer	TOTAL PAYMENT	<i>90.75</i>
Check by "X"	1525-10-41-500 Bks. Trip.—A.P.Co.	CUSTOMER'S COPY	Signature of Agent.

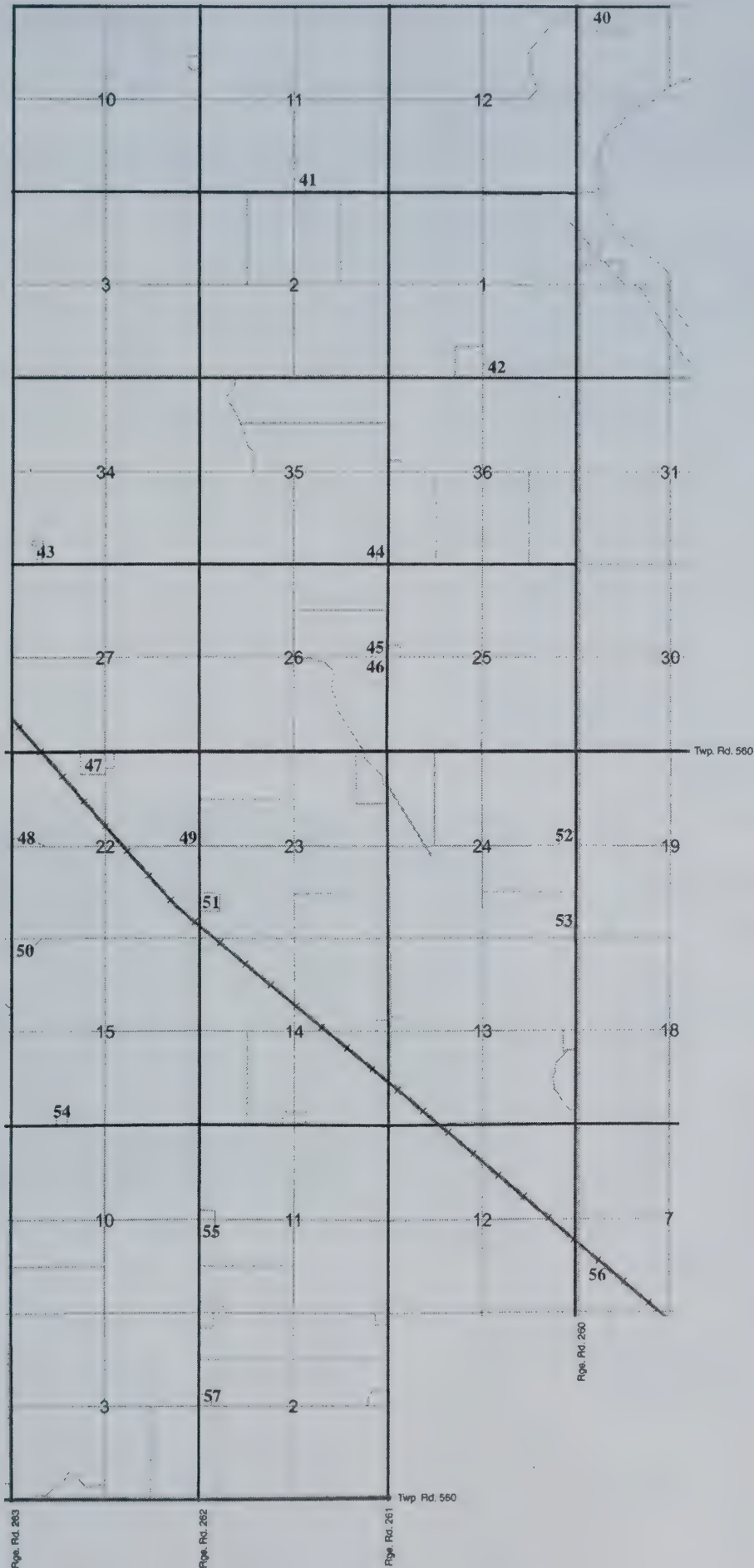
Receipt for purchase of Elephant Brand fertilizer, 1945

ACREAGE OWNERS

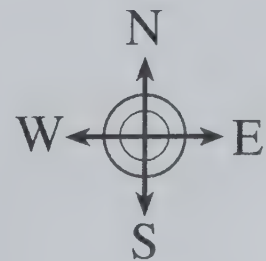
1. J. Mahe
2. Tolsma
3. N & S Carnegie
4. Comeau
5. N & J Brenneis
6. T & A Kluthe
7. D & L Falls
8. J. Bauer
9. Donald Hittinger
10. Kyle
11. Trevor Sheehan
12. Dan Sheehan
13. G & D Haasz
14. R & M Friedrich
15. J & M Dwyer
16. Johnson
17. Sweeney
18. M. Gagne
19. R. Durand
20. M & M Henley
21. R & C Gibbons
22. F. Stamper
23. D. Boisvert
24. Donald Kluthe
25. Dorothy Kluthe
26. Brian Kluthe
27. Flynn
28. V & S Price
29. F & L Hoeber
30. T. MacDonald
Former site of
Belle Valley School
31. Stirling
32. B & M Harris
33. Lindsey
34. Sobeys
35. E & M Natress
36. G & L Kluthe
37. D & D Soetaert
38. L & R Falls
39. V & P Boddez



ACREAGE OWNERS



40. B & C Biollo
41. T. Rivet
42. Tanner
43. St. Charles Graveyard
44. David Kluthe
Former site of
Egg Lake School
45. Ron Kieser
46. Michael Brenneis
47. Hinton
48. R & A Pirtle
49. Kluthe
50. J & D Victoor
51. D. Lirondelle
52. Kevin Kluthe
53. J. Craig
54. Jim Sheehan
55. Porter
56. Former site of Tellier School
57. S & C Headstrom



ALBERTA POULTRY MARKETERS HATCHERIES

10172 - 98TH ST.
PHONE 22276

Baby Chicks, Sexed Pullets, Poultry Feed & Supplies

2667

Please refer to this number when writing

NAME

A. Huffy

EDMONTON, ALTA.

Feb. 2, 1948

ADDRESS

Monville Alta. R.R. 2

STATION

NOTE

Shipment will be made as follows

Railway

Cell

Time

Date

Feb. 23/48

This order is booked subject to the hazards of the hatchery business. If we are unable to ship as indicated you will be advised and shipment will be made as near to the date as possible.

QUANTITY	DESCRIPTION	DEBIT	CREDIT	BALANCE
300	<i>S.O.P. and New Hamp Chickens</i>	<i>54.00</i>	<i>Dr</i>	<i>54.00</i>
7	<i>--- (as 1947 order)</i>	<i>7c.</i>	<i>Dr</i>	<i>54.00</i>
	<i>Cash</i>		<i>3.00 Dr</i>	<i>51.00</i>

PATENTED MOORE BUSINESS FORMS LTD.

Bill from Alberta Hatcheries for purchase of 330 chicks

Retain this Statement for Reference. In Writing, Refer to Lot Number.

Alberta Poultry Producers Limited agrees to pay to its members the proceeds from sales on the basis of quantity and quality and place of delivery, less necessary expenses and reserves, as provided by its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

ALBERTA POULTRY PRODUCERS LIMITED

HEAD OFFICE: 10207 - 108th Street, EDMONTON, ALBERTA

Belo
EDMONTON

Date *Mar 5, 1947* Lot No. *4697*

Doz.	Odd	PRICE	AMOUNT
"A" Large	31	6	30
"A" Medium	10	6	28
"A" Pullets	1	5	23
"B"	2	2	24
"C"	2	19	03
Cracks	1	2	17
Total	44	11	
Comm. Eggs			
Broken	1		
Bad			
Short			
Total Cap'y of Cases	45		

Gross Value *12.99*
Deductions:
Egg Cases \$ *45.45*
Shipping Charges \$ *45.45*
Net Value *12.54*

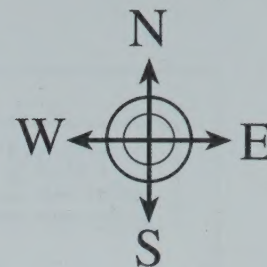
Receipt for sale of eggs, 1947

NORTHERN ALBERTA DAIRY POOL LTD.		SERIES 157	432954	
DATE		MAR 25 1955		
GRADE MARKINGS	LBS. CREAM	GRADE	TEST	LBS. B.F.
SP SPECIAL	50		30	150
X No. 1			62	9.30
Z No. 2				
O G OFF GRADE				
FLAVORS	VALUE		50	
C CHEESY	TRANSPORTATION			
M METALLIC	DEDUCTION FOR		8.80	
O OILY	NET AMOUNT			
SW STINKWEED	CREAM STATEMENT			
W WEEDY	NORTHERN ALBERTA DAIRY POOL LIMITED			
Y YEASTY	10531-102ND STREET			
	EDMONTON - ALBERTA			

Cream receipt from Northern Alberta Dairy Pool (NADP), 1955

Land Ownership Map

1893 - 2007



Twp. Rd. 564	Rge. Rd. 271																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																</
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(See front of book for land owners North of Twp. Rd. 564)

Please Note: the years prior to 1918 indicated next to the landowner names were taken from the Provincial Archives. The years 1918, 1923 and 1927 show ownership on those dates according to Cummins Rural Maps. Due to the amount of archival research required, the middle years 1928 to 1967 are not included. The most recent owner names were taken from Sturgeon County maps. All information is subject to error.

Twp. Rd. 564						
Rge. Rd. 263	Rge. Rd. 262	Rge. Rd. 261	Rge. Rd. 260			
Pirtle, A & R Hinton, D & D Baillie, G & D Brenneis, L. 1967 Morrison, Alex 1918 Fraser, Simon 1901	Kluthe, L & L Kluthe, L & W Kluthe, L & S Tellier, Maurice 1967 Gibeau, Hector Gibeau, J. 1918 Cameron, 1893	Alberta 340308 Lirondelle, Mac 1967 Borle, E. 1927 L'Hirondelle, J. 1918 Krievsky, G. 1907 Lubbock, J. 1904 C.P.R.	VanBrabant, P. VanBrabant, A. VanBrabant, A & M Halle, J. 1967 L'Hirondelle, J. 1918 L'Hirondelle, A. 1907 C.P.R.	Kluthe, Y. Kluthe, J.J. 1967 Steffes, Mrs. G. 1918 Chastillain, L. 1896	Kluthe, J & F Kluthe, John & Y Kluthe, Aloys 1967 Steffes, J. 1918 Beaudry, Alfred 1896	Lutz, J & E & Lutz, W. Lutz, W. Lutz, Joseph 1967 Lutz, V. 1918 C.P.R. 1901
Borle, H & P Elliott, Edgar 1967 McLeod, K.A. 1918 Cameron, J. 1893	Kluthe, B. Kluthe, L & W Tellier, M. 1967 McLeod, 1927 McLeod/Gibeau 1918 Cameron, J. 1893	Lirondelle, L. Lirondelle, Mac 1967 L'Hirondelle 1918 Krievsky, G. 1907 Bullock, J. 1904 C.P.R.	VanBrabant, L. Hoerber, L. VanBrabant, A & M Halle, J. 1967 L'Hirondelle, A. 1918 Biggar, O. & Cross, C. 1902, (\$3.00/ac) C.P.R.	Alberta, 340308 Lirondelle, L. Lirondelle, L & E Lirondelle, Elie 1967 L'Hirondelle, A. 1918 Rowland, Geo 1898	Kluthe, Y Kluthe, John Kluthe, Aloys 1967 Steffes, J. 1918 L'Hirondelle, J.B. 1896	Hesse, J & E Hesse, John Hesse, Barbara 1967 Lutz, J. 1927 Lutz, C. 1918 C.P.R. 1901
Sheehan, J & T Hogart, J. Tellier, J.W. 1967 Tellier, E. 1918 C.P.R.	Kluthe, T & K Kluthe, Wm Kluthe, L & Wm Tellier, M. 1967 Gibeau, Hector Heppler, J. 1927 Lubbock, J 1904 (\$4.00) C.P.R.	Manning, I Byer, I Byer, Tony Byer, Nick 1967 Byer, M. 1918 Kaupf, Johann 1897	Alberta 340308 Lirondelle, L. Lirondelle, Elie 1967 L'Hirondelle, A. 1918 Lutz, John 1899	Stanley, P. Stanley, P&L Muller, M. 1967 Muller, G. 1918 Muller, George 1899 (\$3.00/ac) C.P.R.	Alberta 591432 Pereira & Moniz Lands DeRudder, Peter DeRudder, Louis 1967 DeRudder, L. 1927 Lutz, C. 1918 Fraser, Simon 1893 C.P.R.	VanBrabant, T. Flynn, B&L Sabourin Farms Sabourin, A. 1967 Tellier, E. 1918 Tellier, J.A. 1902
Sheehan, J & J Sheehan, J & T Hogarth, D. Tellier, Jos 1967 Tellier, E. 1918 C.P.R. 1905	Kluthe, W & J Kluthe, L & Wm Tellier, Matt 1967 Gibeau, Hector Heppler, J. 1927 Kramps, A. Lubbock, J. 1904 (\$4.00) C.P.R.	Nolte, J & J Kerckhof Byer, I Byer, Tony Byer, L. 1918 Byer, L. 1896	Wulff, E & L Krywko, K & J Wulff, E & L Wulff, Albert 1967 Wulff, N. 1927 Wills, M. 1918 Brenhofer, B. 1895	Bokenfohr, J&L Bokenfohr, Joe 1967 Meunier, J. 1918 Hutto 1905 Hinkleman 1902 Williams, L. 1895 C.P.R.	Bokenfohr, J. Bokenfohr, J. 1967 Sheehan, J. 1927 Lutz, John 1899 Fraser, Simon 1893 (\$3.00/ac) C.P.R.	Lutz, A&A & J&K & Bayley, S Lutz, A Lutz, A&J Tellier, Matt 1967 Tellier, E. 1918 Tellier, Hugh 1896
Sheehan, J. & Sheehan, P & S Sheehan, P & J Sheehan, P.T. 1967 Sheehan, P.F. 1927 Sheehan, J. 1918 Sprenger, C. 1899	Tappauf, K,E,W & G Kerckhof, L & A Walters, G & W 1967 Halley, G. 1918 MacDonald, A. 1900	Kerckhof, L & A Kerckhof, L. 1967 Wulff, H Wulff, N. 1927 Smith, Ron & M 1918 Smith, John 1909	Bokenfohr, J Bokenfohr, Joe 1967 Meunier, Joe 1927 Smith, Ron & M 1918 Smith, John 1909	Bokenfohr, J. Bokenfohr, Joe 1967 Meunier, J. 1927 Wills, N. 1918 Meunier, Omer 1904	Bokenfohr, J&L Bokenfohr, Joe 1967 Meunier, Jos. 1918 Cousineau, Jos. 1899	Lutz, A&A & J&K & Bayley, S. Lutz, A&A Tellier, M. 1967 Tellier, Mrs. C. 1927 Holgate, R. 1918 Muller, J. 1896
Sheehan, J&J & J&J Sheehan, J&T & M&A Sheehan, Joe 1967 Sheehan, J. 1918 Asthausen, H 1899	Moher, R & J Satre, R & S Byer, J & E 1967 Putman, P.A. 1927 Cross, H. 1918 Tazleff, M. 1900	McVittie, D & G Sanders, N & C Satre, R & S Brochu, A. 1967 Smith, Ron & M 1918 Smith, John 1909	Nolte, J & J Nolte, J. Jr. Nolte, J. 1967 Muller, J. 1918 Smith, Ron & M 1918 Smith, John 1909	Nolte, J&J Nolte, J. Jr. Nolte, J. 1967	Bokenfohr, Vincent Bokenfohr, Joe 1967	Perrott, S. Bokenfohr, Robert Steffes, Anne 1967
Sheehan, M & A Sheehan, J & T 1967 Sheehan, F. 1923 Sheehan, J. 1918 Asthausen, H. 1902 C.P.R. 1901	Krywko, J & C Borle, E.J. 1967 Borle, V. 1918 Rammelaere, A. 1902 C.P.R. 1901	Krywko, H. Krywko, J & C Krywko, Wm 1967 Meunier, Ed Cote, A. 1918 Billo, Francois 1897	Krywko, James Harasimuk, F. Krywko, Wm. 1967 Meunier, O. 1927 McMillian, J. 1918 Brisette, Ed 1901			
Kerckhof, L & A DeRudder, Anna 1967 Borle, Ed Borle, V. 1918 Borle, L. 1902 (\$3.50) C.P.R. 1901	Krywko B&C Krywko P&E Krywko, Ed DeRudder, C. 1967 Soetaert, J. 1899 (\$3.00/ac) C.P.R. 1901	Krywko, E & P Krywko, ED Krywko, Wm 1967 Meunier, ED Cote, A. 1918 Billo, Jean B. 1897	Krywko, E & P Krywko, Ed Krywko, Wm 1967 Meunier, Ed Meunier, O. 1918 Chaput, R. 1899			
Rge. Rd. 263	Rge. Rd. 262	Rge. Rd. 261	Rge. Rd. 260	Twp. Rd. 560		

